This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

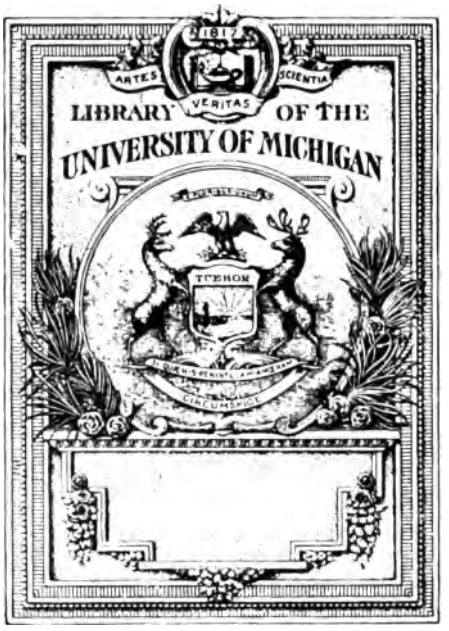
About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

B 1,297,009

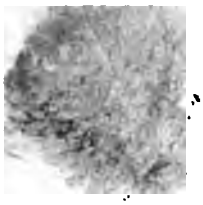
VILLAS OF FLORENCE AND TUSCANY

HAROLD DONALDSON EBERLEIN



THE GIFT OF
Carl Kressbach

Walk Bennett
2/28/24



VILLAS OF FLORENCE AND TUSCANY

THE
PRACTICAL BOOKS
OF HOME LIFE ENRICHMENT
EACH PROFUSELY ILLUSTRATED, HANDSOMELY BOUND.
Octavo. Cloth. In a slip case.

THE PRACTICAL BOOK OF PERIOD FURNITURE
By HAROLD DONALDSON EBERLEIN AND ABBOT McCLURE
New Edition

THE PRACTICAL BOOK OF EARLY AMERICAN ARTS AND CRAFTS
By HAROLD DONALDSON EBERLEIN AND ABBOT McCLURE

THE PRACTICAL BOOK OF INTERIOR DECORATION
By
EBERLEIN, McCLURE AND HOLLOWAY
New Edition

THE PRACTICAL BOOK OF FURNISHING THE SMALL HOUSE AND APARTMENT
By EDWARD STRATTON HOLLOWAY

THE PRACTICAL BOOK OF ARCHITECTURE
By C. MATLACK PRICE

THE PRACTICAL BOOK OF ORIENTAL RUGS
By DR. G. GRIFFIN LEWIS
New Edition, Revised and Enlarged

THE PRACTICAL BOOK OF GARDEN ARCHITECTURE
By PHEBE WESTCOTT HUMPHREYS

THE PRACTICAL BOOK OF OUTDOOR ROSE GROWING
By GEORGE C. THOMAS, Jr.
New Edition, Revised and Enlarged

VILLAS OF FLORENCE AND TUSCANY

BY

HAROLD DONALDSON EBERLEIN

JOINT AUTHOR OF THE PRACTICAL BOOKS OF
"INTERIOR DECORATION" "PERIOD FURNITURE",
AND "AMERICAN ARTS AND CRAFTS"

WITH A FRONTISPIECE IN COLOUR AND 299 ILLUSTRATIONS MOSTLY FROM PHOTOGRAPHS BY THE AUTHOR

PHILADELPHIA & LONDON
J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY

NEW YORK
THE ARCHITECTURAL RECORD COMPANY

1922

Architecture

COPYRIGHT, 1920, 1921, 1922, BY THE ARCHITECTURAL RECORD COMPANY
COPYRIGHT, 1922, BY J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY

PRINTED BY J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY
AT THE WASHINGTON SQUARE PRESS
PHILADELPHIA, U. S. A.

GIFT
Carl Kressbach
1-29-81
add. copy

TO

MY BELOVED MOTHER, HESTER ANN CROOK EBERLEIN, DESPITE HER FOURSCORE AND EIGHT YEARS, THE DEAR COMPANION OF MY TRAVELS IN A CHERISHED LAND,

THE GENTILISSIMA MARCHESA ELEONORA ANTINORI-CORSINI, WHOSE KINDLY OFFICES, UNFAILING INTEREST AND READY ENCOURAGEMENT HAVE PAVED THE WAY FOR MY LABOURS

THIS VOLUME IS DEDICATED AS A TRIBUTE TO THE STERLING WORTH OF THAT RARE TYPE OF GENTLEWOMANHOOD SO FAITHFULLY EXEMPLIFIED BY THESE TWO LADIES OF A PATTERN ALL TOO RAPIDLY DISAPPEARING

FOREWORD

USCANY has poured forth a stream of beauty and charm that has had a marked effect upon modern life within the past fifteen or twenty years. This gracious influence has affected not only architecture and interior decoration, but in a sense it has helped to free us from an element in our cultural tradition that was rapidly becoming academic and stilted. The fresh impulse emanating from Tuscany appeals specifically both to the architect and to the person minded to build a new abode, and also in a more general way to all that love beauty for its own sake and would gladly have a share in the best things of art for the joyaunce of themselves and their friends. The public, therefore, have eagerly welcomed this new infusion of Italian influence.

Without a knowledge of the unsung loveliness of Tuscan rural life and the spirit of Tuscany, one cannot hope to have an adequate and sympathetic understanding of the Italian Renaissance, that marvellous efflorescence of Italian genius to which our modern civilisation is debtor in countless ways.

Only the larger and more celebrated villas are familiar to most of us. Hence we are apt to think of all villas as imposing in size of structure and area of demesne. Actual facts, however do not bear out such a conception. Hundreds of villas are of modest extent and unpretentious structure. Not a few are really small.

The average visitor to Florence and other parts of Tuscany sees the stock sights and a few of the surrounding villas that are admittedly "shew places," to which access may be more or less readily obtained. After viewing these he goes away, little dreaming of the many delights hidden behind the high walls that line the roads he has traversed in his comings and goings. Consequently he has no full perception of the character of Tuscan domestic architecture,

and the majority of the villas, the gardens, and the manner of life lived therein, are almost as much of a " sealed book " to him as though each gate were guarded by cherubim with flaming swords to bar his ingress.

There is no intention to derogate one jot from the claims of the " shew " villas; they are wonderful places replete with every grace and beauty, and well deserve all the admiration and praise they usually receive. But the other villas, and especially the smaller villas, where a more intimate character has been preserved, afford an invaluable index to the very heart of Tuscany. Toward these attention is particularly directed. It is the joy of these that the author hopes to share with the reader, as well as the beauties of a few of the larger and more famous places.

One must understand in some measure the character of the less known estates, that constitute a preponderant element of Tuscan country life, in order to gain a ripe appreciation of even the physical quality of that wondrously beautiful land—a land of steep wooded hills and fertile valleys; of sombre cypresses and pines and ilex trees; of turreted castles perched on rocky peaks; of old walled towns glistering white against the liquid blue and purple haze of distant mountains; of skies of limpid brilliance; of smiling slopes clad with vines and olive groves; of far-flung prospects all surcharged with that elusive, idyllic tenderness that the primitive painters caught and imprisoned in their landscape backgrounds.

In speaking of a " villa " it should be borne in mind that the term applies not only to the dwelling itself but to the surrounding grounds as well, and also includes the sundry subsidiary buildings. In other words, the villa, whether of little or great extent, is a complete entity and wholly self-contained in its completeness. It is the home of the master and his family; it is also the home of his dependents, and there is all necessary provision for the various farming operations, including the making and storing of oil and wine. This self-reliant completeness of each villa, this

sturdy dependence upon its own resources, is characteristic of the country and imparts a peculiarly individual tone to the whole scheme of rural life scarcely to be paralleled elsewhere.

If the best results are to be derived from our examination of Tuscan country houses, it is highly important that we possess information as full and accurate as possible concerning each one that comes within our purview. To compass that end, therefore, it has seemed advisable to present a certain number of representative villas, thoroughly considered in all their characteristic details, rather than to give one or two fleeting, random glimpses of this, that or the other place, skipping hastily from spot to spot, without following any coherent or systematic scheme. By supplying, in the case of each villa discussed, a complete illustrative record from every significant point of view, along with such brief elucidating text as may be necessary, the reader will gain a far more satisfactory insight into the subject than could possibly result from the cursory survey of incidental views chosen from a wider range. This method, so far as the writer is aware, has never hitherto been pursued. It will doubtless prove more welcome than the tantalising and inconclusive hop, skip and jump method.

The obvious advantage to commend this course is that in no case are numerous architectural questions left wholly unanswered. Having seen one side of a villa, the reader is not incontinently left to guess what may be on the other, with a strong likelihood that the side not shewn might disclose items of even greater interest or value to him. In this way, therefore, by confining investigation to a given number of villas, thoroughly representative of their several types, a comprehensive grasp of the subject will be reached, in the light of which architect and client with full understanding may draw whatever lessons are to be learned and make such applications as seem good to them, while the general reader will have the satisfaction of a well-rounded conception.

The villas of Tuscany are not all of a common pattern,

although all exhibit certain particulars of strong family resemblance that stamp them as unmistakably Tuscan and completely differentiate them from the rural domestic establishments to be found in other parts of Italy. There are local differences to be observed between the villas round about Florence and the villas round about Siena. Again, those about Lucca differ from both the former. And so it goes. There are also differences, as is to be expected, between the villas of one age and those of another. The villas of the Baroque seventeenth century manifest certain characteristics quite distinct from those of the sixteenth or fifteenth. Even amongst those of one period, one locality, and one generally prevalent type, occur engaging nuances of individuality that sustain the elements of interest and surprise, no matter how many of them one may visit. Monotony is a thing unknown. These diversities will appear and receive comment in due course as the reader advances through the book.

In studying these villas one must not forget that it is important to heed the gardens as well as the houses, for the former are inseparably associated with the latter, and each without the other would fail of the essential charm inherent in the whole *ensemble*. The manner of furnishing, too, and all the processes of domestic management contribute their share to our appreciative enlightenment and our comprehensive conception of the leisurely and dignified though simple mode of existence of which the villas are the outward embodiment.

The exteriors, especially where the house itself stands on or near the highway, are reticent in aspect, but that reticence is pierced and the real character becomes apparent once the visitor finds himself within.

If the reader is enabled to apprehend some of the subtle charm with which the villas of Florence and Tuscany are informed, if he is enabled to discern some measure of the excellences they reveal upon close acquaintance, so that he

may apply to his own behoof the lessons thence derived, the purpose of this book will be achieved.

In conclusion the author desires to acknowledge his gratitude and obligations to his friends, Charles Eyre, Esq., whose cordial assistance and unfailing advice laid the foundations of this volume; the Marchesa Eleonora Antinori-Corsini, whose kind interest and ready help have been of incalculable value in endless ways; the Principe Andrea Corsini and Donna Anna de' Marchesi Antinori, whose advice and aid have been joined also to the innumerable courtesies of the Marchesa Antinori and Mr. Eyre; Signor and Signora Riccardo Daddi-Borgheri; Signor and Signora Guido Colucci; Arthur Acton, Esq.; Signor and Signora Delfino Cinelli; Doctor G. B. Roatta; Cecil Pinsent, Esq.; Robert B. C. M. Carrère, Esq; Doctor Guido Biagi, Oliver Reagan, Esq.; and Miss Ada M. Clark.

The author wishes likewise to record his appreciation of sundry courtesies extended by the Princess Aldobrandini, the Marchesa Chigi, the Duchessa di Bomarzo, the Contessa Parravicino, the Conte Rasponi, the Conte Giulio Guicciardini, and Dr. Poggi of the Uffizi Galleries.

To his friends Newton P. Bevin, Esq., for the title page design, and William Hough, Esq., for the use of some of the plans which stress of time prevented him from securing, he is under deep obligations.

Last, though not least, he thanks Livio and Sandro, whose skillful driving and help with the camera facilitated the labour of making the photographs; Umberto, Dino, good old Domenico, and all the humble nameless folk whose thousand little acts of courtesy and consideration made the collection of the material herein contained a pleasure; Signor Piancastelli of Florence, Mr. Percival and Mr. Cooper of London, and Mr. Wallace of Philadelphia for their care in developing and printing negatives that were

often far from perfect; and finally his friends E. S. Holloway, Esq., of the J. B. Lippincott Co., who painted the frontispiece, and M. A. Mikkelsen, Esq., of the Architectural Record, along with the respective staffs of the J. B. Lippincott Co. and the Architectural Record.

PHILADELPHIA

WHITSUNTIDE, 1922 H. D. E.

CONTENTS

PAGE

FOREWORD 7

CHAPTER I. THE TUSCAN VILLA BEFORE THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY 23

CHAPTER II. THE TUSCAN VILLA OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY 35

CHAPTER III. THE TUSCAN VILLA OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY 45

CHAPTER IV. DECORATION AND FURNISHING 55

CHAPTER V. GARDENS EARLY AND LATE 67

VILLAS

CIGLIANO, SAN CASCIANO, VAL DI PESA 81

IL GIOJELLO (VILLA GALILEO), PIAN DE'GIULLARI ... 99

L'OMBRELLINO, PIAN DE'GIULLARI 113

VILLA PAZZI (LA VACCHIA), PIAN DE'GIULLARI 121

IL FRULLINO, SAN GERVASIO, NEAR FLORENCE 143

VILLA CAPPONI, ARCETRI 155

THE VILLETTA, VILLA PALMIERI, SAN DOMENICO, NEAR FLORENCE 177

VILLA CELSA, NEAR SIENA 195

IL TREBBIO, IN THE MUGELLO 205

CAFAGGIUOLO, IN THE MUGELLO 211

POGGIO A CAJANO 223

LE CORTI, SAN CASCIANO, VAL DI PESA 237

VILLA DEI COLLAZZI, TAVARNUZZE, NEAR FLORENCE. 253

BELCARO, NEAR SIENA 269

VICOBELLO, NEAR SIENA 285

VILLA DEL ARCIVESCOVO, NEAR LUCCA 297

POGGIO TORSELLI, NEAR SAN CASCIANO, VAL DI PESA 307

LA PIETRA, IL PELLEGRINO, NEAR FLORENCE 323

VILLA PALMIERI, SAN DOMENICO, NEAR FLORENCE ... 343

CETINALE, NEAR SIENA 367

LE MASCHERE, IN THE MUGELLO 377

VILLA GARZONI, AT COLLODI, NEAR PESCIA 385

VILLA CORSI-SALVIATI (GUICCIARDINI), AT SESTO 399

ILLUSTRATIONS

East Walk in Garden, Cigliano (Color plate) .....*Frontispiece*
Wayside Chapel, near Torre del Gallo .....page 31
Acquaio or Lavabo in Dining Room, La Pietra .....page 31
Fifteenth Century Staircase, Villa Colletta .....page 32
Fifteenth Century Fireplace, Villa Colletta .....page 32
Seventeenth Century Wall Painting in manner of Berain, La Pietra .....page 51
Seventeenth Century Fireplace, Villa Sassetti .....page 51
Seventeenth Century Pair of Doors .....page 52
Fourteenth Century Geometrical Wall Painting, Villa Palmieri .....page 57
Early Fifteenth Century Credenza, La Pietra .....page 57
Fourteenth Century Wall Painting, Museum of San Marco ..page 58
Geometrical Garden Plan, from Serlio .....page 58
Early Renaissance Garden, Painting, School of Botticelli.....page 71
"Barrel-topped" Pergola, from Hypnerotomachia Poliphili ....page 71
Fountain of Venus, Villa Petraia .....page 72
Fountain by Verocchio and Tadda, Palazzo Vecchio .....page 72
Early Renaissance Walled Garden, from Biblioteca Estense, Modena .....page 75
Early Renaissance Walled Garden, from Pietro Crescenzi's "Agricoltura" .....page 75
Seventeenth Century Fountain and Steps, Villa Corsini, Castello .....page 76
Geometrical Garden Plan, from Hypnerotomachia Poliphili ....page 76

VILLAS

Cigliano, San Casciano, Val di Pesa
Plate 1, Ground Floor Plan ..... page 83
Plate 2, North Front ..... page 84
Plate 3, North Front ..... page 85
Plate 4, Portone ..... page 86
Plate 5, Loggia in Cortile ..... page 87
Plate 6, Window in Loggia ..... page 88
Plate 7, Entrance Hall, from Cortile ..... page 89
Plate 8, Well Head in Cortile ..... page 90
Plate 9, South Front and Garden ..... page 91
Plate 10, Detail of South Front and Garden Door ..... page 92
Plate 11, Garden Gate, end of East Walk ..... page 93
Plate 12, Gate into Garden ..... page 94
Plate 13, Fountain in Wall of Lemon House ..... page 95

Plate 14, Pool and Lemon House ..... page 96
Plate 15, West Side ..... page 97
Il Giojello (Villa Galileo), Pian de' Giullari
Plate 16, Ground Floor and Garden Plan ..... page 103
Plate 17, Road Front and Entrance ..... page 104
Plate 18, Approach from Garden to Cortile ..... page 105
Plate 19, Gate from Garden into Cortile ..... page 106
Plate 20, Cortile and Southeast Wing ..... page 107
Plate 21, Well Head in Cortile ..... page 108
Plate 22, Cortile and Northwest Wing ..... page 109
Plate 23, West Terrace, Looking North ..... page 110
Plate 24, North Side ..... page 111
L'Ombrellino, Pian de' Giullari
Plate 25, Ground Floor Plan ..... page 115
Plate 26, Northeast Front ..... page 116
Plate 27, Southwest End and Entrance ..... page 117
Plate 28, The Cortile ..... page 118
Plate 29, Garden Door ..... page 119
Plate 30, Within the Cortile ..... page 120
Villa Pazzi (La Vacchia), Pian de' Giullari
Plate 31, Ground Floor and Garden Plan ..... page 125
Plate 32, Gateway and Chapel ..... page 126
Plate 33, Chapel, and Cypress Walk to Podere ..... page 127
Plate 34, North Front, from Gate ..... page 128
Plate 35, North Front ..... page 129
Plate 36, North Front ..... page 130
Plate 37, House Door ..... page 131
Plate 38, Doorway in Salone ..... page 132
Plate 39, Salone ..... page 133
Plate 40, Music Room ..... page 134
Plate 41, Music Room ..... page 135
Plate 42, Windows in Music Room ..... page 136
Plate 43, Detail, South Front ..... page 137
Plate 44, South Front and Terrace ..... page 138
Plate 45, South Front from Garden ..... page 139
Plate 46, Garden Gate ..... page 140
Plate 47, Little Walled Garden ..... page 141
Plate 48, Kitchen Cortile ..... page 142
Il Frullino, San Gervasio, near Florence
Plate 49, Ground Floor Plan ..... page 145
Plate 50, Entrance ..... page 146
Plate 51, South Front ..... page 147
Plate 52, South Front from Garden ..... page 148
Plate 53, North Front ..... page 149

Plate 54, Salone ..... page 150
Plate 55, Door within Loggia ..... page 151
Plate 56, Loggia Arcade in Cortile ..... page 152
Plate 57, Well Head in Cortile ..... page 153
Plate 58, East Side of Cortile ..... page 154

Villa Capponi, Arcetri

Plate 59, Ground Floor and Garden Plans ..... page 157
Plate 60, Lane Leading down to Villa Capponi ..... page 158
Plate 61, Lane Leading up to Villa Capponi ..... page 159
Plate 62, Entrance Hall ..... page 160
Plate 63, Hallway, looking towards Entrance ..... page 161
Plate 64, Crossarm of Hall ..... page 162
Plate 65, Salone ..... page 163
Plate 66, Fireplace in Salone ..... page 164
Plate 67, End of Salone ..... page 165
Plate 68, Morning Room ..... page 166
Plate 69, Dining Room ..... page 167
Plate 70, Garden Front ..... page 168
Plate 71, Garden Front from Box Pleasaunce ..... page 169
Plate 72, Loggia in Garden ..... page 170
Plate 73, Box Pleasaunce ..... page 171
Plate 74, Gateway to Box Pleasaunce ..... page 172
Plate 75, Middle Garden ..... page 173
Plate 76, End Wall, Middle Garden ..... page 174
Plate 77, Lower Garden and Pool ..... page 175
Plate 78, Postern Gate in Lower Garden ..... page 176

The Villetta, Villa Palmieri, San Domenico, near Florence

Plate 79, Ground Floor and Garden Plans ..... page 181
Plate 80, South and West Fronts ..... page 182
Plate 81, Entrance ..... page 183
Plate 82, Portone Detail ..... page 184
Plate 83, South Front and Box Pleasaunce ..... page 185
Plate 84, Well Head in Box Pleasaunce ..... page 186
Plate 85, West Front and Threshing Floor ..... page 187
Plate 86, Postern Gate in Walled Garden..... page 187
Plate 87, Loggia and Cortile ..... page 188
Plate 88, Fragment of Fourteenth Century Fresco in Ground floor Loggia ..... page 189
Plate 89, Fifteenth Century Armorial Fresco in Loggia .. page 189
Plate 90, Loggia, Cortile, and Outside Staircase ..... page 190
Plate 91, Kitchen and Fireplace ..... page 191
Plate 92, First Floor Loggia ..... page 192
Plate 93, First Floor Loggia looking into Cortile ..... page 192

Plate 94, Part of South Front and Stable ..... page 193
Plate 95, House Door and Box Pleasaunce ..... page 194
Villa Celsa, near Siena
Plate 96, Plot Plan ..... page 197
Plate 97, Entrance, part of South Front and Chapel .... page 198
Plate 98, South Front, Cortile Screen and Garden .... page 199
Plate 99, Gateway and detail of Cortile Screen ..... page 200
Plate 100, Chapel, Designed by Baldassare Peruzzi .... page 201
Plate 101, Well Head in Cortile ..... page 202
Plate 102, East and North Fronts ..... page 203
Il Trebbio, in the Mugello
Plate 103, Gateway ..... page 207
Plate 104, Entrance ..... page 208
Plate 105, The Garden ..... page 208
Plate 106, Northeast Angle ..... page 209
Plate 107, Cortile ..... page 210
Cafaggiuolo, in the Mugello
Plate 108, Castle and Garden from an old Painting .... page 215
Plate 109, Old Print, shewing East Front ..... page 216
Plate 110, South and East Fronts ..... page 217
Plate 111, East Tower and Entrance ..... page 218
Plate 112, Portone ..... page 219
Plate 113, East and North Fronts ..... page 220
Plate 114, Cortile ..... page 220
Plate 115, Salone ..... page 221
Plate 116, Dining Room ..... page 222
Poggio a Cajano
Plate 117, Palazzo and Ancient Garden Plans from an old Painting ..... page 227
Plate 118, South Front ..... page 228
Plate 119, Stair and Terrace Details, South Front .... page 229
Plate 120, Loggia, South Front ..... page 230
Plate 121, Within the Loggia, South Front ..... page 231
Plate 122, Terrace, South Front ..... page 232
Plate 123, East Front, from Garden ..... page 232
Plate 124, Grotto, under North Terrace ..... page 233
Plate 125, Great Hall ..... page 234
Plate 126, Staircase, Anteroom, Apartments of Bianca Capella ..... page 235
Plate 127, Fireplace in Apartments of Bianca Capella .. page 235
Le Corti, San Casciano, Val di Pesa
Plate 128, Plot Plan ..... page 239
Plate 129, The Gate ..... page 240

Plate 130, East Front ..... page 241
Plate 131, East and South Fronts ..... page 242
Plate 132, South and West Fronts ..... page 242
Plate 133, East Portone and Northeast Tower ..... page 243
Plate 134, North Front ..... page 243
Plate 135, North Door ..... page 244
Plate 136, Cortile ..... page 245
Plate 137, Staircase from the Cortile ..... page 246
Plate 138, Chapel Door, from the Ante-chapel ..... page 247
Plate 139, Chapel Gallery ..... page 248
Plate 140, Chapel Wall ..... page 249
Plate 141, Portrait Gallery ..... page 250
Plate 142, North Gallery ..... page 251
Plate 143, Flower Garden ..... page 252

Villa dei Collazzi, Tavarnuzze, near Florence

Plate 144, Plan of Entrance ..... page 255
Plate 145, Approach to Cortile ..... page 256
Plate 146, Entrance to Cortile ..... page 257
Plate 147, North Front ..... page 258
Plate 148, North Loggia ..... page 259
Plate 149, Southwest Angle of Cortile ..... page 260
Plate 150, Doorway in West Wing ..... page 261
Plate 151, Ground and First Floor Loggias ..... page 262
Plate 152, South Loggia, First Floor ..... page 262
Plate 153, Detail, First Floor Loggia, North Front .... page 263
Plate 154, Detail, First Floor Loggia, South Front .. page 264
Plate 155, South Front ..... page 265
Plate 156, Great Hall ..... page 266
Plate 157, Fireplace in Great Hall ..... page 267

Belcaro, near Siena

Plate 158, Plot Plan ..... page 273
Plate 159, Outer Gate ..... page 274
Plate 160, West Screen of Cortile and Outer Court .... page 274
Plate 161, Entrance through West Screen ..... page 275
Plate 162, Cortile, from Gate in West Screen ..... page 275
Plate 163, Door Detail, West Screen of Cortile ..... page 276
Plate 164, South Front and Cortile ..... page 277
Plate 165, South Side of Cortile ..... page 278
Plate 166, East Screen of Cortile ..... page 278
Plate 167, Door Detail, South Side of Cortile ..... page 279
Plate 168, Well Head in East Screen of Cortile ..... page 280
Plate 169, South and East Fronts, and Walled Garden .. page 281

Plate 170, Southwest Angle ..... page 282
Plate 171, East Front and Walk on Battlements .... page 283
Plate 172, Belvedere and Walk on Battlements ..... page 284
Plate 173, Cannon Balls and Tablet in Wall ..... page 284
Vicobello, near Siena
Plate 174, Plot Plan ..... page 287
Plate 175, Well Head in Cortile ..... page 288
Plate 176, Gateway from Cortile into Parterre ..... page 289
Plate 177, Terminal Niche in Garden ..... page 290
Plate 178, South Front ..... page 291
Plate 179, Chapel and South Front ..... page 292
Plate 180, Belvedere, Lower Garden ..... page 292
Plate 181, Steps from Parterre to Lower Garden ..... page 293
Plate 182, Walk in Lower Garden ..... page 293
Plate 183, Garden Stair with Espaliered Trees ..... page 294
Plate 184, Stair from Lower Garden to Terrace .... page 295
Villa del Arcivescovo, near Lucca
Plate 185, Plot Plan ..... page 299
Plate 186, West Front ..... page 300
Plate 187, Central Pavilion, West Front ..... page 301
Plate 188, East Front ..... page 302
Plate 189, Loggia, East Front ..... page 303
Plate 190, Detail of Loggia, East Front ..... page 304
Plate 191, Detail of Windows ..... page 304
Plate 192, Gateway into Podere ..... page 305
Plate 193, Gateway into Park ..... page 306
Poggio Torselli, near San Casciano, Val di Pesa
Plate 194, Ground Floor and Garden Plans ..... page 309
Plate 195, Approach through Cypress Viale ..... page 310
Plate 196, North Front ..... page 311
Plate 197, Chapel Entrance, East Wing ..... page 312
Plate 198, Coach House Entrance, West Wing ..... page 313
Plate 199, Staircase ..... page 314
Plate 200, Salone ..... page 315
Plate 201, Salone ..... page 316
Plate 202, Southeast Front and Terrace, from Garden .. page 317
Plate 203, The Garden ..... page 318
Plate 204, Cross Alley in Garden ..... page 319
Plate 205, Steps to Terrace and South Door ..... page 320
Plate 206, The Terrace ..... page 321
La Pietra, Il Pellegrino, Via Bolognese, near Florence
Plate 207, Plot Plan ..... page 325

Plate 208, The Gate Lodges ..... page 326
Plate 209, The Viale ..... page 326
Plate 210, Northwest Front ..... page 327
Plate 211, Northwest Front and Garden Wall ..... page 328
Plate 212, Portone ..... page 329
Plate 213, Southeast Front from Garden ..... page 330
Plate 214, Southeast Front ..... page 331
Plate 215, Southeast Front and Terrace ..... page 332
Plate 216, Southeast Front from Lower Garden ..... page 332
Plate 217, Lower Garden from Terrace ..... page 333
Plate 218, Southeast Front from Parterre ..... page 333
Plate 219, Steps in Garden ..... page 334
Plate 220, Middle Gate, Walled Garden ..... page 335
Plate 221, West Gate, Walled Garden ..... page 336
Plate 222, Staircase ..... page 337
Plate 223, Salone ..... page 338
Plate 224, Dining Room ..... page 339
Plate 225, Fireplace in Dining Room ..... page 340
Plate 226, Fireplace in Ball Room ..... page 341

The Villa Palmieri, San Domenico, near Florence

Plate 227, Plot Plan ..... page 349
Plate 228, Inner Gateway ..... page 350
Plate 229, Approach to North Front ..... page 351
Plate 230, North Front ..... page 352
Plate 231, Portone ..... page 353
Plate 232, Parterre, Terrace and South Front ..... page 354
Plate 233, Gateway to Parterre ..... page 355
Plate 234, The Chapel ..... page 355
Plate 235, Ramp from Parterre to Terrace ..... page 356
Plate 236, South Front and Terrace ..... page 357
Plate 237, South Door and Clock ..... page 358
Plate 238, Cortile and Loggia ..... page 359
Plate 239, West End of Loggia ..... page 360
Plate 240, Thirteenth Century Door in Cortile ..... page 361
Plate 241, The Pool ..... page 362
Plate 242, Box Parterre and Terrace Wall ..... page 363
Plate 243, Box Parterre and Stair to Pool Enclosure .... page 364
Plate 244, Box Parterre and Well Head ..... page 365

The Villa Cetinale near Siena

Plate 245, Plot Plan ..... page 369
Plate 246, Viale of Ilexes and Entrance ..... page 370
Plate 247, Cross Alley at Entrance ..... page 371

Plate 248, Upper Garden Parapet ..... page 371
Plate 249, South Front ..... page 372
Plate 250, North Front ..... page 373
Plate 251, Outside Staircase, North Front ..... page 374
Plate 252, Entrance to Terrace ..... page 375
Plate 253, The Chapel ..... page 376
Plate 254, Road to Lower Garden ..... page 376

Le Maschere, in the Mugello

Plate 255, Entrance, East Front ..... page 379
Plate 256, East Front ..... page 380
Plate 257, The Chapel ..... page 381
Plate 258, West Door ..... page 381
Plate 259, North Front ..... page 382
Plate 260, West Front ..... page 383

The Villa Garzoni, at Collodi, near Pescia

Plate 261, Plot Plan ..... page 391
Plate 262, Parterre and Palazzo ..... page 392
Plate 263, Ramp to South Front ..... page 393
Plate 264, Portion of Parterre and Hedges ..... page 393
Plate 265, Pavilion back of the Palazzo ..... page 394
Plate 266, Parterre and Terraces, from Gate ..... page 395
Plate 267, Cascade, looking up from Upper Terrace .... page 396
Plate 268, Parterre and Pools, from Top of Cascade .... page 397
Plate 269, The Parterre de Broderie ..... page 398

The Villa Corsi-Salviati (Guicciardini), at Sesto, near Florence

Plate 270, Plot Plan ..... page 401
Plate 271, South Front ..... page 402
Plate 272, South Front, Parterre and Pool ..... page 403
Plate 273, West Belvedere, South Front ..... page 404
Plate 274, Fountain and Pool in Parterre ..... page 404
Plate 275, Box-Bordered Beds in Parterre ..... page 405
Plate 276, Loggetta overlooking Long Pool ..... page 405
Plate 277, Long Pool ..... page 406
Plate 278, Walk and Gateway in Garden ..... page 407
Plate 279, West Pool and Dependencies ..... page 407

VILLAS OF FLORENCE AND TUSCANY

CHAPTER I

THE TUSCAN VILLA BEFORE THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

IT SEEMS always to be *de rigueur* to pry into the origins of any institution whereon the light of archæological erudition may be shed. Archæological erudition is a most valuable aid to the understanding and oftentimes an indispensable factor in creating an intelligible background, but there is likewise not seldom a danger that the background may be so elaborated in its details that the importance of the principal subject to be pourtrayed is thereby belittled.

In the present case, therefore, where the archæological temptation is so strong and might readily become overwhelming if yielded to, it is best to indulge the propensity for discoursing upon antecedents as little as possible. Reserving efforts in that direction for another occasion, let us not regard the Tuscan villa as the complex result of a long ancestry of historic, social and economic phenomena, each requiring minute analysis, but rather let us accept it at its face value.

Suffice it to say in explanation of its genesis that the Tuscan villa, as we find it prior to the middle of the fifteenth century or, in most cases, the beginning of the sixteenth, numbered three chief progenitors in its immediate line of descent—the castellated stronghold, the fortified tower, and the farmhouse—while there was a more remote connexion with the country dwelling of Etruscan antiquity.

Those equally mysterious and clever people, the old Etruscans, from whom the early Romans learned their most

gracious arts, had fully developed the principle of the *cortile* and loggia, as we know from the evidence of their tomb paintings. It seems as though the germ of these two features, that contribute so much to the charm and habitability of the late Mediæval and Renaissance Tuscan villa, must have lain hidden and dormant in the conscience of Tuscany—the endemic conscience, one might almost call it—ready to spring into life again and flourish after the lapse of centuries when the time was ripe for reappearance. The tower, apparently another conception of Etruscan builders, was the unit of mediæval domestic architecture in Florence. A number of these towers, belonging to a group of related families or friendly neighbours, built around a central space made possible the *cortile* with its permanent loggias in the enclosed area. Thus was the ancient principle reaffirmed. Hence, too, in due time was developed the *palazzo*.

When political conditions and the state of the country gave sufficient assurance of security to warrant intermittent or occasional residence in outlying districts for the supervision of estates, there was still need for a protective form of architecture. It was the most natural thing in the world, therefore, to transfer to the countryside the city method of building which gave the required protection. Thus did a combination of the small castle, the tower rising storey above storey, and the fortified farmhouse capable of defence produce the type of villa generally found before the middle of the fifteenth century or the beginning of the sixteenth.

In the case of those early villas that possess a tower, as so many of them do, it is safe to assume that the tower is the oldest part of the structure, the nucleus about which successive additions were made, providing in time for an enclosed courtyard or *cortile* with its well and its attendant loggia. Fortunately, there are plenty of instances either to illustrate each stage of the evolutionary process or else to shew where and how the subsequent additions were made by which the individual villa has arrived at its present form. Il Trebbio (Plates 103–107), frowning from the top of a

wild and rugged hill in the Mugello, where Cosimo de' Medici, the first Grand Duke of Tuscany, spent many of his happiest boyhood days, is a good example of the castellated stronghold which served as an occasional country residence for the Florentine nobility. Il Frullino (Plates 49–58), a little villa on the Via Camerata near San Gervasio, hardby the tramway that climbs to Fiesole, shews plainly the original tower, and it is not difficult to trace how at later dates a bit was added on here and a bit there until the *cortile* was enclosed and adorned with a loggia. The Villa Celsa (Plate 98), near Siena, notwithstanding the severely fortified character of the main portion of the house, exhibits the stages by which the *fattoria* and sundry dependencies were added, until finally the *cortile,* bounded on three sides by the walls of the castle and its subsidiary buildings, was enclosed on the fourth by throwing a screen across it in the seventeenth century.

Of course the processes of evolution were not unvarying in all cases, but in the end a general type was reached that displayed more or less uniformity in essential features while allowing scope for endless minor individualities that lend zest to the pursuit of one's investigation. The most significant external variation in the general type consisted in the disposition of the *cortile* and loggia. Broadly speaking, the *cortile* might be wholly enclosed on all four sides by the body of the house, and the loggia might be carried about the whole circuit of the courtyard or might occur on one or two sides only. Again, the *cortile* might be surrounded on three sides by the body of the house while the fourth side was screened by a curtain wall. In this latter arrangement the loggia might be carried along inside this curtain wall, which separated the *cortile* from the garden and incorporated it within the lines of the house, and might or might not have rooms built over it. A slight variation from this latter scheme shewed the loggia or loggias incorporated within the body of the house leaving the wall merely as a separation between the *cortile* and the garden. The essen-

tial point of differentiation lay in the complete surrounding of the *cortile* by the body of the house or in its separation on one side from the garden by a curtain wall. These two major methods of variation admitted of great flexibility in their several manners of interpretation.

Il Trebbio (Plate 107), Il Frullino (Plate 49), and the Villetta (Plates 79 and 90) adjoining the Villa Palmieri, near San Domenico, on the road to Fiesole, have the *cortile* wholly surrounded by the body of the house. At Il Trebbio there are loggias on two opposite sides of the *cortile* and one of them shelters a rather rude example of one of the characteristic outside staircases; at Il Frullino and the Villetta there is a loggia at only one side of the *cortile*. The Villa Galileo (Plate 16) at Pian de' Giullari, the Villa Capponi (Plate 59), at Arcetri, and Cigliano (Plates 1 and 5), near San Casciano above the Val di Pesa, all have the *cortile* at one side separated from the garden by a curtain wall. At the Villa Galileo the wall is merely a barrier (Plates 18 and 19) between the *cortile* and the garden, while the ground floor loggia, now walled in to form two rooms, is at one side. At the Villa Capponi a very small *cortile* is half covered by a loggia with rooms above it, while another loggia has been built in modern times in the garden just outside the dividing wall. At Cigliano the loggia, which is carried along the curtain wall, has a range of first floor rooms built over it (Plate 5). The illustrations of these examples give some idea of the latitude of interpretation possible. The fact that no *cortile* appears on the plan (Plate 31) of the Villa Pazzi (La Vacchia), at Pian de' Giullari, although this is one of the oldest villas, one portion of it dating back to 1180, is to be explained by the many alterations and additions the fabric has undergone in the course of which the *cortile* has been built over. In all probability the *cortile* once occupied the space now covered by the *salone* or great hall.

As early as the twelfth century Florence had brought the country to the north, south, east and west of her into some semblance of settled order so that the establishment of

estates and fortified farms became possible. For the most part, however, these estates were left to the *contadini* to cultivate under the supervision of a bailiff and the absentee landlords rarely spent more than a day or two in residence. It was not until the fourteenth century that villa life can be said to have taken a really firm hold. Thence onward we find an increasingly rapid multiplication of the country houses which to-day contribute so important an element to the aspect of rural Tuscany.

In studying the early villas there is one common characteristic of which we must not lose sight—the tendency to centralise everything within one compact block or closely connected series of buildings, not separating the farm dependencies from the dwelling in the manner we are accustomed to in England and America. Oftentimes under one and the same roof we find not only the abode of the master and his family, with quarters for the domestic servants, but also accommodation for the *fattore* or bailiff and the *contadini* or farm labourers' families, the *cantina* or storage place for the wine and oil produced on the estate, the *granaio* or granary, the *scuderie* or stables, ware-rooms for sundry sorts of agricultural products, drying-rooms for the grapes out of which eventually the *vin santo* is pressed, and proper places for making the oil and the wine.

This concentration, dictated in the beginning by the need of protection and defence in times when the condition of the country was none too settled and lawlessness and violence were everyday events, has continued with little abatement or interruption and has, it must be admitted, certain practical advantages to commend it. The master and mistress can keep everybody and all domestic or agricultural operations well under their own eyes. There is never a time in the day when they cannot easily know exactly what all their servants and dependants are about. Also, especially in inclement weather or in the scorching heat of summer noon, they can visit all the sundry offices under cover.

As an apposite instance to shew how this seemingly con-

glomerate and unwieldly arrangement may work out with perfectly satisfactory and comfortable results, we may point to Cigliano (Plates 1–15), a villa that has been left virtually untouched in all important particulars since the latter part of the *quattrocento.* The rooms occupied by the family are all on the ground floor, with the exception of a range of small rooms on the first floor directly over the loggia. The rest of the first floor is occupied by the servants and the *contadini.* To the west of the house the land falls abruptly to the valley and at this side the lower level of the ground gives access to a spacious vaulted basement storey in which are the *granaio,* storage rooms and the *cantina,* the latter lined about all the walls with great wine casks and huge earthen oil jars amply large enough to have concealed Ali Baba and the forty thieves very thoroughly. And hard by is the stable.

It is not too much to say that the mode of life lived at Cigliano, patriarchal in its simplicity and amplitude, is not at all incompatible with much quiet elegance. In the morning the several members of the family go about their duties or occupations, or perhaps drive. Luncheon comes at one o'clock, after which there is the siesta for those so inclined, while others not disposed to sleep devote the time to correspondence or reading. Later in the afternoon there is driving or motoring, tea, visiting and other social duties, and dinner comes at eight or eight-thirty. The *cortile,* the loggia and the garden play important parts in the scheme of domestic existence, and are used every day and all day. The Italian naturally loves to be in the open air, and in the loggia he can gratify his inclination with perfect privacy and, at the same time, leave his books, papers and other chattels lying about with as complete security from disturbance or weather as though they were in a room. Nor need things be put away at night, for then the great *portone* or outer door of the villa is shut and there comes that satisfying sense of protection that always invests a Tuscan house after the performance of this ceremony. If the noonday sun pours down

too fiercely into the *cortile,* a light canvas awning can be drawn across the whole space, in the old Roman manner, making a cool shade and causing a refreshing draught to blow through from the great north door to the garden door. The garden, too, is fully made use of and really lived in. It is spacious enough for all horticultural delight and small enough to preserve the sense of intimacy. Being protected by an high wall, it has also the cardinal merit of privacy.

As to the fabric of the early Tuscan villa, its walls may be of stone, but are more usually of stone covered with stucco. In the latter case the doorways and the trims of the windows are generally of the grey or grey-brown *pietra serena* or sandstone, carefully dressed and carved with vigorous mouldings and bold consoles supporting the projecting cills and lintols. The outside windows of the ground floor rooms are almost always protected by stout iron grilles or gratings. Time was when these gratings were necessary for protection; now they are rather a convention than otherwise, although it is a satisfaction to be able to leave the window of a ground floor bedroom wide open knowing that no nocturnal prowler can get in. The roofs are of red tiles and have wide projecting eaves, which create agreeable relief of shadows in lieu of a cornice.

The *gelosie* or shutters, with fixed slats, are generally of a light, blithe green. When they are used for the grated ground floor windows they are so contrived as to slide back and forth; at other windows they swing on hinges. The stuccoed walls of most of the early villas are of a colour whose elusive quality well nigh baffles accurate description. Indeed it depends largely upon the sort of light in which they are seen. In certain lights they are grey, in other lights they appear unmistakably rosy pink, salmon, buff, or warm umber. In some cases, where they have been purposely tinted, the pink or light brown are more or less constant, but ordinarily the hue changes with chameleon-like mutability

It is impossible to lay down any fixed rule regarding the plan of the early villas. Apart from the two methods of

arranging the *cortile* and grouping the rooms about it, to which allusion has already been made, the disposition of the rooms and their uses seem to have been determined by personal preference or by the special requirements of each individual case. Then, again, in a great many instances so many changes and additions have occurred in the course of centuries that the original plan, whatever it may have been, has been entirely obliterated. In no two houses, therefore, do we discover identity of arrangement. At Cigliano, besides the *sala* or great living-room, the dining-room and a morning room, the ground floor has a number of large bedrooms, while the kitchen is in the basement storey. At the Villetta, adjoining the Villa Palmieri, the *sala* is on the ground floor but the kitchen (Plate 91) and dining-room are both on the first floor. At Il Frullino (Plate 49) the dining-room is on the ground floor and the whole first floor is given over to bedrooms, but there are certain features that lead one to suppose that the dining-room was at one time on the first floor. One might readily go on multiplying instances to shew the flexibility of arrangement that apparently once obtained. In every villa there is, or at least there always was, some part set aside for a chapel, or else the chapel was a separate building outside.

In the early villas the staircase was a purely utilitarian feature and was never made the vehicle of architectural effort as it was at a later date. There might be, it is true, a carved newel capped with a seated lion or perchance, a fretted balustrade, or, if there was an outside staircase—as at Il Trebbio or the Villetta,—some slight amenity of design might be bestowed upon it. As a rule, however, the staircase was in an inconspicuous place and was not much embellished. Sometimes there was merely a winding stair in a remote corner.

It was otherwise with the fireplaces and doorways upon which a wealth of carved enrichment was often lavished. The nature of this enrichment may be seen from illustrations in this volume and from numerous illustrations

WAYSIDE CHAPEL—NEAR TORRE DEL GALLO

ACQUAIO OR LAVABO IN DINING ROOM—LA PIETRA, IL PELLEGRINO, FLORENCE

FIFTEENTH CENTURY STAIRCASE—VILLA COLLETTA, IL PELLEGRINO, FLORENCE

FIFTEENTH CENTURY FIREPLACE—VILLA COLLETTA, IL PELLEGRINO, FLORENCE

elsewhere, especially in books devoted particularly to this subject. Another object upon which carved decoration was very frequently displayed was the *lavabo* or *acquaio,* an accessory often found in dining-rooms or in some convenient position close by. It was a permanent structure of stone built into the wall in the manner of a niche and provided with a bason and a tap whence issued running water. Here ablutions could be made before and after meat, and water could also be drawn for the table. The *acquaio* in the dining-room of the Villa Pietra is a good example of fifteenth century design.

The floors were generally paved with stone or with large, flat bricks about eleven by five inches in size. It was customary to paint and varnish the bricks so that a smooth surface was presented. The window cills of the windows on the ground floor were oftentimes high above the floor. When this was the case, the window was approached by several stone steps and there was not infrequently a stone seat across the window embrasure or two small seats in the corners, supported on moulded bases. Good examples of such arrangements may be seen in the music room of the Villa Pazzi and in the loggia of Cigliano.

The ceilings were either lunette vaulted, with pendentives springing from carved stone corbels or else were beamed with heavy timbers, the beams resting upon richly carved corbels of wood. Beams and corbels were embellished with colour and the coffers between the beams were likewise often painted. The painted decorations of the ceilings along with the geometrical diapered patterns and other devices that often covered the plaster walls gave the rooms a rich, warm aspect of an intensity which we sometimes find it difficult to visualise from the faded examples one now occasionally sees. The subject of mural decoration will be more fully dealt with in the chapter on Decoration and Furnishing. The walls were not invariably painted. Oftentimes they were merely whitewashed or greywashed. In such cases the white or grey of the walls and ceilings

served as an admirable foil to enhance the effect of the carved stone corbels, many of which were exquisitely wrought with that delicate grace that distinguished the craftsmanship of the fifteenth century, so admirably exemplified in the work of Mino da Fiesole and men of his school.

Another particular in which the skill of the stone carver found opportunity was the embellishment of the capitals for the columns of the loggias and the corbels from which sprang the pendentives of the vaulting. Both capitals and corbels were often of elaborate design. Occasionally we find medallions of polychrome maiolica inserted in exterior walls as an item of enrichment. A good example of this sort of decoration occurs in the *cortile* at Cigliano.

CHAPTER II

THE TUSCAN VILLA OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

OMPARING the villas of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, on the one hand, with those of the sixteenth, on the other, we find there is a perceptible difference. There is a difference in the spirit that underlies their conception. There is also a difference, which it requires no very critical eye to detect, in the manner of their architectural expression. They are more consciously architectural in plan, in exterior aspect, and in their interior arrangement. They are less rugged in appearance and, in many cases, they have lost a certain picturesque or romantic quality that the earlier villas possessed, a quality derived from their primitive simplicity, from the somewhat fortuitous method of their growth, and from the *naïvete* with which additions were made as inclination or necessity prompted without reference to formulated principles of composition. To compensate for this loss they have gained in coherence of mien and in elegance of finish. The principles of balance, of symmetry, and deliberate architectural endeavour have entered upon the stage and made themselves felt to a degree unknown under the old order.

They were designed to accommodate virtually the same mode of life as their predecessors, but the scheme of domestic existence was a little more amplified, a little more pretentious in its relation to externals. They were still the centres of agricultural estates and the principle of concentration, explained in the preceding chapter, still remained in force. But the villas were obviously designed less for defence than they had been previously. There was plainly a tendency to make more of the master's dwelling, which was now marked by more commodious apartments and a general aspect of

spacious comfort. The other functions of the villa sink more into abeyance, so far as actual appearances are concerned, and we often find the dwellings of the *fattore* and the *contadini*, the stables, the *cantina*, and other dependencies detached or even at some distance from the master's house. When they are not at a distance, they are skillfully concealed or else suppressed and minimised as far as possible so that their presence as a part of the establishment is not so conspicuous. In other words, the machinery is hidden or shifted into the background, the amenities of proprietary residence are magnified.

This change may be attributed to several causes. It will suffice to mention four. In the first place, there was a greater degree of civil security. Turmoils and alarums there were, but outside of periods of recognised warfare when disorders were naturally to be expected, there was less disturbance from petty lawlessness and brigandage to keep the countryside chronically apprehensive. As the century advanced the firm rule of Duke Cosimo de' Medici measurably stabilised conditions throughout Tuscany, made law respected and produced an hitherto unwonted standard of order. Consequently, the need for defensive architecture and close concentration of the villa dependencies decreased.

In the second place, a substantial increase in wealth favoured more pretentious dwellings and encouraged the taste for splendour and display. As a result, we behold greater and broader dignity of composition in the villas of the period, and a corresponding heed to the approaches and surroundings. Furthermore, the Classic influence was becoming more and more clearly articulate and potent, with its emphasis on formality, symmetry, order and balance. At the same time, the scope of the architect as a recognised and necessary factor in the field of domestic design was vastly broadened. Last of all, the taste for the enjoyment of nature and the disposition to spend more time in the country, bred of humanistic ardour and so characteristic of the sixteenth century throughout Italy, led the nobility and other landed

proprietors to a solicitude for villas worthy of their estate far greater than when the country house was merely a place of occasional and brief sojourns on visits of supervision.

It would be impossible to find a more striking illustration of the change of spirit that had taken place than a comparison between the Villa dei Collazzi (Plates 145–155) and Le Corti (Plates 129–143), on the one hand, and Cigliano (Plate 2), the Villetta (Plate 80) at San Domenico, Il Frullino (Plate 53), or the Villa Pazzi (Plate 36), on the other. Le Corti and Villa dei Collazzi are embodiments of the new and larger conception of what was appropriate in villa architecture; the others typify the characteristics of the earlier period, characteristics dwelt upon in the preceding chapter.

The Villa dei Collazzi has always been ascribed to Michelangelo as architect, and although this attribution has frequently been disputed, there seems to be no sufficient ground to dismiss it as apocryphal. To say that the villa discloses certain architectural faults is no valid proof of other authorship, for it is an admitted fact that some of Michelangelo's fully authenticated architectural performances betray points open to very serious criticism. Michelangelo never professed to be an architect. Indeed, he always disclaimed the title and all his architectural labours were taken up under strong pressure and with a disinclination on his part amounting at times to positive aversion. At all events, the Michelangelesque origin of the Villa dei Collazzi is neither here nor there so far as the present issue is concerned. It is enough for us that a masterly conception of the greatest breadth and dignity, thoroughly and consciously architectural in spirit, has distinctly stamped a stage of progress.

Le Corti, while at first glance it appears to retain not a little of the earlier austerity of exterior aspect, upon closer examination discovers a fully coherent and finished conception of composition along with mature judgement of values in the employment of external details. An inspec-

tion of the interior is still more convincing. Simplicity is dominant. But it is the simplicity of studied calculation and, in conjunction with the simplicity, there is every evidence of a completely rounded scheme carried out with vigorous but restrained elegance.

Le Corti and the Villa dei Collazzi, to name only two of the many significant examples of the new order, indicate that Tuscany was not a whit behind the rest of Italy in responding to the new impulses destined to produce such momentous results in the arts of domestic architecture and garden design. In point of actual date, indeed, Tuscany was well in advance. There is a disposition on the part of some to regard Rome as the source and inspiration of the Renaissance Italian villa. They are wont to imply, if they do not explicitly state, that the Roman villa of the Renaissance antedated villa developments elsewhere and supplied the pattern for emulation. And the general public, with unreflecting credulity, is all too ready to accept this alluring claim of priority.

It is quite true the Renaissance Roman villa experienced a rapidity of growth and attained a degree of magnificence unparallelled in other parts of Italy so that the eyes of admiration are compelled to turn their gaze thither. But the initial impetus for all this glory did not originate in Rome. It is hardly too much to say that Rome never originated anything, and that what she borrowed from external sources she wondrously enriched and developed with heroic amplitude. So it was with the Renaissance villa.

As a matter of actual fact, villa life was an established institution in Tuscany while Rome was still in a slough of late Mediæval torpor, and the country around Rome a desert wilderness tenanted chiefly by peasants and infested with banditti or with doubtful characters who lurked amidst the ruins of Classic antiquity. The first impulse toward the building of villas in the country round about Rome came from Tuscany, as we shall see by-and-by. As we have already noted, Tuscan villas in the sixteenth century

responded to the current impetus toward architectural development, and in the seventeenth there was a corresponding change. The Roman villa quickly reached a spectacular and grandiose climax. It fairly burst into immediate full bloom. One stands amazed at the stupendous scale upon which buildings and gardens alike were executed. The progress of the Tuscan villa, on the contrary, was more even and uniform. Its history began earlier, its development was more conservative, and it has held its own, with undiminished charm, to the present day. Besides all this, the Tuscan villa realised a certain domestic and human quality that the creations of Roman magnificence never achieved.

How the Tuscan villa was forerunner and antetype to the Roman villa of the Renaissance may be gathered from the story of the Villa Madama. This princely dwelling, on the slope of Monte Mario a little way outside the walls of Rome, Raphael designed for the Cardinal Giulio de' Medici a few years before he ascended the Papal Throne as Clement VII. The work begun in 1517 was carried on after Raphael's death in 1520 by Giulio Romano, his favourite pupil and heir, presumably with the continued collaboration of Giovanni da Udine and the brothers Battista and Antonio da Sangallo. By 1521 not more than a third of the vast pile devised by Raphael for the main structure had reached a state of partial completion. The various stables, garden houses, and other subsidiary buildings were either never finished or, for the most part, as a matter of fact, never even begun. The garden plans fared no better in their fulfillment. What was actually accomplished in the way of garden making was but a scant moiety of the magnificently ambitious scheme the ablest designers of the time had contrived on paper. At this point the work stopped, never to be resumed. The first great Roman villa of the Renaissance was destined to remain unfinished.

But though so small a portion of this gigantic project was ever realised, the *plans* for the villa and its environment of gardens, wherein were all manner of delights that

fertile Renaissance invention could compass, were *known,* and *shewn,* and *talked of* throughout the length and breadth of Italy. Draughts of the designs were passed from hand to hand and lent to this or that great personage, and other princely builders and their architects failed not to draw therefrom suggestions that they could put into effect in the several undertakings of villa building or garden designing they had in contemplation or on which they then chanced to be actually embarked. Thus the unfulfilled plans for the Villa Madama supplied an epoch-making stimulus and exercised a profound influence.

But Cardinal Giulio de' Medici, with all his cleverness, did not conceive the scheme for his palatial villa without something to suggest it. The germ of inspiration is undoubtedly to be found in his vivid recollection of the villas about Florence in which he had passed much of his boyhood. There was Poggio a Cajano (Plate 118); there was Careggi; there was Cafaggiuolo (Plate 110), in the Mugello; and there was the sun-bathed villa on the southern slope of the hill beneath Fiesole. A person of Giulio's sensitive temperament, receptive to every appeal of art, could never forget the manifold delights of these rural abodes. Nor could he forget that each of them had been designed by an eminent architect—Poggio a Cajano by Giuliano da Sangallo, the other three by Michelozzo Michelozzi. What more natural then, when he found himself in a position to realise a long-cherished dream, than that he should desire to emulate or even endeavour to surpass his early Tuscan homes, summoning the ablest masters of his day to aid him in the undertaking? The Villa Farnesina, a less ambitious conception attributed to Raphael, which somewhat antedates the Villa Madama, was built by a Tuscan, Agostino Chigi of Siena. Thus is it evident that from Tuscany came the primal inspiration that opened the avenue to the subsequent performance of such momentous achievements in the creation of Roman Renaissance villas.

Likewise, in the matter of retaining eminent architects to

design villas, the palm of priority belongs to Tuscany. There were the four villas just mentioned, for example, and there was the old Villa Rusciano which Luca Pitti—he who built the Pitti Palace, to his own undoing—called in Brunelleschi to remodel and enlarge. One might easily go on multiplying instances and also add lists to indicate where great architects and sculptors have not disdained to make some small touch of embellishment or execute some trifling enlargement to ancient houses that were allowed to retain most of their primitive aspect. While these precedents were established in the fifteenth century, it was, however, the sixteenth that witnessed a general recourse to the services of acknowledged professionals.

Although Poggio a Cajano and Cafaggiuolo, so far as their actual date is concerned, belong to the fifteenth century, it has seemed best to speak of them in connexion with the sixteenth century for the spirit by which one of them is informed—Poggio a Cajano—appears rather to belong to the later period and prefigures the day when the villa became an object of explicit and conscious endeavour on the part of the recognised professional architect. The other—Cafaggiuolo—was intentionally designed in the earlier castellated manner and displayed the true date of its erection only in the matter of details current at the time so that it is not, in reality, representative of the century in which it was built. It is mentioned in this place solely because of the deliberate architectural effort of which it was the result, a procedure distinctive of the later period.

The walls of the sixteenth century villa were customarily of stone coated over with stucco while *pietra serena* or sandstone was employed for the execution of details. In the case of the Sienese villas the native stone of the region, resembling the Roman travertin, was used instead of the *pietra serena*. The roofs were of red tiles, as they were in the preceding century, and the overhanging eaves were retained. The fabric in general displayed virtually the same characteristics of quality and use of materials.

In the matter of plan, however, we meet with a significant change. While in many cases the *cortile* preserved its old status as an important feature, in many others it was eliminated from the scheme and instead of a *cortile,* wholly or partially surrounded by the body of the house, we find a courtyard along one side of the main structure. About the other side of this courtyard were ranged the subsidiary buildings belonging to the villa. Occasionally we find not only the *cortile* dispensed with but not even a courtyard to take its place. Le Corti has the old *cortile* wholly enclosed with loggias about all four sides. The Villa dei Collazzi, on the other hand, has a *cortile* entirely open on one side, without even the semblance of a curtain wall, thus introducing a new method of treatment for an old feature. By way of contrast, Belcaro (Plate 169) and Vicobello (Plate 178), both of them near Siena and both designed by Baldassare Peruzzi, have no *cortili* incorporated within the mass of the house but are planned as compact rectangular blocks, a form that Peruzzi seems to have preferred, basing his predilection, perhaps, upon certain principles of Classic composition that had recently been strongly emphasised.

Belcaro still maintains a good share of the external character of the old castle which Peruzzi was required to rebuild as a villa. The conditions under which he was working made it expedient to contrive an oblong courtyard, ranging the dependencies on the long side opposite the master's house, while the ends are closed by screens shutting off respectively the garden and the outer fortified court. The *cortile* is still a pivotal feature, but there is a new centre of gravity—it has changed its position in the general plan. It is an extremely beautiful composition. At Vicobello no such pre-existing conditions imposed any necessity upon the architect. Here, nevertheless, he chose virtually the same arrangement. The Villa del Arcivescovo (Plate 186), near Lucca, is a good example of the country house without either enclosed *cortile* or central courtyard of the sort just described.

During the sixteenth century the beamed and painted ceilings and the ceilings with lunette vaulting and pendentives springing from carved stone corbels, of the sorts described in the preceding chapter, continued to be made. At the same time, we meet more frequently with the barrel vaulted ceiling, sometimes of great span (Plates 156 and 125), and now and then we encounter the coved ceiling. The floors in general were paved with stone or with large flat bricks of the kind previously mentioned. These bricks were often painted and varnished, in the manner before indicated, and the colour was apt to be a dark brownish red, although at times there was apparently some attempt at diversity of colour and pattern. Cement or *terrazzo* was also used.

Fireplaces and doorways continued, as in the fifteenth century, to be the vehicles of much beautiful and graceful carved enrichment although, as the century wore on, it is to be observed that projections, lines and patterns all tended to become appreciably bolder and lose that exquisitely tender delicacy that imparts an almost ethereal quality to so much of the *quattrocento* work. We see this tendency plainly exemplified in the work of Michelangelo and in the designs of Benvenuto Cellini, to name only two exponents of the prevailing spirit of their age. There are those who affect to sneer at the older mode, sniff at it as "goldsmiths' work," and call it non-architectural. The fact remains, however, that it possesses in marked degree a rare and noble refinement, a certain peculiarly spiritual attribute which the later work can never approach, and totally misses without giving us anything to take its place. Vigorous and florid fancy, coupled with great manual dexterity, may be brilliantly effective but can scarcely prove a satisfying substitute.

The staircase of the sixteenth century began to assert itself more than its predecessor of the fifteenth and was accorded more serious attention both in the plan and in the matter of appropriate architectural ornament. At Le Corti, for example, while the treatment is thoroughly conservative

there is, nevertheless, observable a distinct advance over the manner of dealing with it seen in some of the older villas (Plates 137 and 139). At Poggio a Cajano and Careggi, as we have already found, staircases received a measure of consideration above the usual wont of the time. At Font' all' Erta, where Bartolommeo Ammanati was employed to add an imposing loggia, the staircase presents a really modern aspect. It is not until the seventeenth century, however, that we can expect the general development of the staircase to the full extent of its possibilities.

In the particular of mural decoration we find the old geometrical diapered repeats and arabesques gone out of fashion. When chromatic enrichment was added to walls it was much more in accord with current tastes to employ frescoes based on clearly conceived themes and possessing pictorial interest and continuity. They were regarded less as a decoration pure and simple and more as a professed work of art and were judged accordingly. Not only walls but ceilings also were thus frequently adorned.

Apart from the use of tapestries, another way of using fabrics for wall decoration was to apply damasks and brocades which produced an exceedingly rich and full coloured effect. The chapel walls at Le Corti (Plate 140) present an interesting example of such treatment with alternate breadths of blue and yellow damask the flowers of the pattern being embroidered, perchance by the ladies of the family as a work of piety.

CHAPTER III

THE TUSCAN VILLA OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

HE seventeenth century brings us face to face with the Baroque movement in the full tide of its imposing course. The seven villas of the seventeenth century illustrated in detail in this volume are all typically Baroque in their external aspect—Poggio Torselli, La Pietra, Palmieri, Le Maschere, Cetinale, the Villa Garzoni at Collodi, and the Villa Corsi-Salviati at Sesto. Three of them, Palmieri, La Pietra and the Villa Corsi-Salviati, antedate this era, but were enlarged, embellished, and given an wholly new exterior character during the period of building activity that marked the seventeenth century. Much of Palmieri really belongs to the thirteenth century, while La Pietra dates in large part from the fifteenth. Their outward appearance, however, by which the visitor is first impressed, is so essentially Baroque that it seems best to reckon them architecturally amongst the villas of the later age.

This is not the place to enter into a general discussion of the merits or shortcomings of the Baroque style. It is far too large a subject and presents too many aspects for consideration. It will be enough to observe that the narrow purist, whose conventional and unquestioned training has taught him to regard the very name Baroque as anathema, will find in the examples here illustrated none of those hysterical and unreasoned manifestations which even the most dispassionate critic would not attempt to defend or justify, manifestations which it must be admitted have brought discredit upon the style. The force of intellectual restraint in architectural expression was always too strong in Tuscany to countenance any of the excesses of riotous sentimentality and perfervid emotionalism that elsewhere occur occasion-

ally and provoke a sense of repulsion. Our bias of temperament may cause us to prefer other styles, but in common justice we are bound to admit that the Tuscan examples of the Baroque manner are sober and dignified in their utterance, and that they constitute a valid claim disposing us to examine fairly and appraise candidly the real values of the style, acknowledging those particulars in which we are to-day indubitably its debtors.

There is no mistaking the outward difference in type between characteristic villas of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Even the most casual observer cannot fail to be conscious of their dissimilar aspect. It is one of the distinctive properties of Baroque architecture that no one in its vicinity can escape being aware of its presence. Its details catch the eye and compel attention; the *ensemble* demands recognition by its dominating mass and the proportion of its parts.

In plan the seventeenth century Tuscan villa usually presented a compact rectangular block, either oblong or approximating a square. Poggio Torselli (Plate 194), Le Maschere (Plate 256) and Garzoni (Plate 262), for example, are oblong in their plan measurements. Cetinale (Plate 246), on the other hand, is virtually square. That Palmieri retains the *cortile* as a part of its scheme is to be attributed to the fact of its expansion from an older nucleus rather than to any architectural preference distinctive of the time in which the addition was made. The same may be said with respect to La Pietra. There, however, in modern times, the *cortile* has been roofed over with glass thus making a light, enclosed court in which a spacious winding staircase ascends to the first floor. The rooms in this type of villa are all commodious and exceedingly lofty and the total height of the building is apt to be considerably greater than was the case with most of the earlier villas.

The walls are customarily of stone coated with stucco—umber, grey, or of the elusive colour already alluded to—the *gelosie* or shutters are still painted a light, merry green, and

the roofs are still covered with red tiles. But there is a difference. The walls are often covered from top to bottom with large panels or other bold designs, vigorously indicated by broad bands of a deeper or contrasting hue, executed by what is to all intents and purposes a *sgrafitto* process, sometimes exhibiting an appreciable projection. Characteristic instances of this manner of exterior wall decoration are to be seen at Le Maschere (Plate 260), on the wings of Poggio Torselli (Plates 197 and 198), and at the Villa Palmieri (Plate 238). The broad, overhanging eaves no longer appear and in their stead we see well organised entablatures with strong cornices crowning the walls. The overhanging eaves, without entablature or cornice, remain at the Villa Palmieri, but then, as was previously explained, Palmieri is fundamentally a much older structure and may reasonably be expected to disclose archaic features.

The doorways and window architraves are still of *pietra serena,* but for the general creation of a striking effect much more reliance is placed in stuccoed projections which take the form of conspicuous pediments above the windows, quoins at the angles or pilasters extending the full height of the façade, brackets and other details pertaining to the entablatures and cornices, and such other kindred adornments of the adept *stuccatore* as scrolls and cartouches. In addition to the items just enumerated, there is a noticeable bursting forth of such consciously architectural adjuncts as balconies, balustrades, parapets surmounted by statuary and imposing exterior staircases. The dependencies, though often massed in conjunction with the master's dwelling, are masqued as subsidiary parts of the main house and are disposed with due regard to a definite sense of architectural composition. This manner of treatment we see exemplified at both Poggio Torselli (Plate 194), and the Villa Corsi-Salviati (Plate 279), while at La Pietra the dependencies are separated from the house by the length of the walled garden. For good instances of the other external characteristics alluded to we may turn to Cetinale, with its garden staircase (Plate 251),

Le Maschere (Plate 255) and the Villa Garzoni (Plate 263), with the striking approaches to their principal entrances, and the Villa Corsi-Salviati with its *belvederi,* balustrades, and statue-surmounted parapets (Plate 271).

Entering within the house, the critical observer will discover that the plan has gradually become somewhat more obvious in its general arrangements, and that an increased emphasis has been laid upon the importance of the *salone* or great hall. Furthermore, there is greater stress upon a balanced, symmetrical disposition of the various rooms with a due regard to axial lines. An examination of the illustrations and plan of Poggio Torselli (Plate 194) will shew the principles of design just noted. A broad and lofty entrance hall leads directly from the house-door to a still more lofty *salone* whose height, in fact, extends to the top of the mezzanine floor. This is a room of truly noble proportions. It is 50 feet long, 30 feet wide, and 25 feet high.

In the seventeenth century villa we find also that the staircase has attained the full growth of its dignity as a feature commanding the bestowal of architectural effort. It is unfortunately difficult to secure satisfactory photographs of many of these staircases owing to the technical limitations of photography and the fact that the photographer must needs have some appropriate point of vantage on which to plant his camera. The staircase at Poggio Torselli (Plate 199), however, is an happy exception in point of this too frequent difficulty, and from the illustration we may see the dignity and breadth of staircase treatment characteristic of the period. The entire construction is of grey *pietra serena* and constitutes a beautiful and restrained example of seventeenth century design—Baroque design in one of its best phases. The staircase at La Pietra (Plate 222) is of modern construction, but the singularly felicitous design of the metal balustrade is taken from an old model, so that it may be regarded as thoroughly representative of the epoch.

Fireplaces and doorways claimed no less decorative emphasis than they did in previous periods but the manner of

expressing that emphasis was changed, a change reflected as well in the external phenomena to which allusion has been made. Stone served the utilitarian purposes of construction, but when it came to the exercise of embellishment we find another medium very frequently preferred. That medium was stucco or plaster. It cannot be said that the plastic sense of Italian craftsmen had increased, or had developed in an wholly new direction, or was in need of a new field of expression. It was merely that the channel of application had shifted and that styles had changed. The preferences of taste in the seventeenth century prescribed that where hitherto the stone carver had been wont to display his cunning in the graceful enrichment of doorways and fireplaces the plasterer or *stuccatore* should now ply his art. And ply his art the plasterer did with lavish generosity and the nimblest dexterity.

It was not only the fireplaces and doorways upon which the *stuccatore* disclosed his fertile ingenuity and mastery of hand. The medium that proved so alluring and so ready of manipulation for these features was likewise turned to account in a far broader field. Walls and ceilings alike bourgeoned forth in an opulent luxuriance of flamboyant tendrils, leafage and flowers interspersed with looped draperies, *amorini,* vases and urns. The same accommodating material served for the craftsman to model pediments, busts, emblems of divers sorts, and sundry architectural adjuncts to dignify the overdoor spaces; from the same obedient composition he likewise moulded great cartouches with armorial bearings and all the attendant panoply of mantlings and interlacing strapwork. The *salone* of Poggio Torselli (Plates 200 and 201) supplies us with an illuminating specimen of this method of decoration. It needs but a glance to see the radical difference between this freer and more florid mode of adornment and the *motifs* and technique employed in the ornamentation of the barrel vaulted ceiling in the great *salone* at Poggio a Cajano (Plate 125) or in the coffered vaulting of the loggia (Plate 121) at the same place.

Brick flooring of the kind before described was still used to a great extent. Stone, marble, and tiling were likewise employed and were often so disposed as to produce no inconsiderable diversity of colour and pattern. Terrazzo, too, proved itself a medium of numerous possibilities and with it the ready-witted craftsman managed to execute results that were effective alike in colour and design. Parquetry floors, also, must be numbered amongst the resources at the disposal of the seventeenth century villa architect.

The old beamed and painted ceilings and the ceilings with lunette vaulting and pendentives had yielded place to the coved ceiling whose shape gave freer scope for the inventions of the *stuccatore* and also provided a less broken field for the execution of the type of frescoes in accord with the genius of the period. With the dominance of the coved ceiling came also an elaboration of the cornice which provided a definite boundary line between the space overhead and the walls. The lunette vaulted ceiling of the *salone* at La Pietra (Plate 223) is an edifying instance of how the Baroque *stuccatore* made a virtue of necessity and adapted his methods to a case in which he was obliged to comply with the structural types of an earlier period. It was the policy of Cardinal Capponi, or of his architect, when the villa was remodelled about 1690, to destroy as little as possible of the old work and to add, instead, such touches as would bring it into accord with the reigning mode. The adroit Baroque craftsman was not to be dismayed by such an arbitrary limitation and promptly devised a treatment which bears the hall-mark of the date of execution and is still in harmony with the structural form retained.

When the walls were not adorned with elaborate stucco conceits, with hangings, or with rich fabrics applied to their whole surface they offered an excellent ground for frescoes or paintings. When some large and important religious, allegorical, mythological, or historical subject was not depicted, or when the space was not given up to a symmetrical array of arabesques after the school of Berain, the

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY WALL PAINTING AFTER THE SCHOOL OF BERAIN—LA PIETRA, IL PELLEGRINO, FLORENCE

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY FIREPLACE—VILLA SASSETTI, IL PELLEGRINO, FLORENCE

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY PAIR OF DOORS — (OBVERSE) (REVERSE)

Courtesy of Wilson Eyre, Esq.

painter not infrequently laid off the surface of the wall in panels and therein pourtrayed hunting scenes or pictured the villas and gardens of the neighbourhood. One room in La Pietra contains representations of a number of the other villas belonging to members of the Capponi family. Likewise at Poggio Torselli and Le Corti, which contains some seventeenth century decorations, we find the villas themselves and their surrounding grounds as they then appeared recorded on the walls. Here again it was no unusual thing for the plasterer to shew his hand and model fanciful frames on the wall to enclose the pictures, so that one feels he is almost omnipresent and is tempted to style the seventeenth century the " plastic period " or " The Age of Plaster."

CHAPTER IV

DECORATION AND FURNISHING

NO CONCEPTION of the Tuscan villas would be complete without some notice of the fixed interior decoration and the methods of furnishing employed, the stage setting, in other words, of the life lived within their walls. Such notice is especially necessary where the background was so highly coloured as it often was in the earlier part of the period covered by our examination. And after all, the everyday things, the little details that historians usually omit to mention, count for a great deal in rounding out one's mental pictures. Accounts of such minutiæ are not a mere record of upholstery, devoid of any special interest or significance. The furniture and other interior equipment of any given period afford an intimate index to that period's mentality and culture: in fact, they are often more than that. Read aright, they often give an insight into the ideals and spiritual condition.

It is fitting, then, that we should review in some detail the general characteristics of walls, ceilings, windows, doorways, doors, fireplaces and other items constituting the fixed background, paying special attention to the methods of embellishment employed, and then pass on to a brief consideration of the movables in ordinary use.

The structural forms of the ceilings have already been noted so that on that score little remains but to add some brief elucidatory comment with respect to certain particulars not previously dwelt upon. In some of the older villas one finds occasional instances of cross vaulting in ground floor rooms or passages, a type much favoured in the Middle Ages, but as a rule the cross vaulting occurs in loggias, while the lunette vaulting, more popular in Renaissance times, was used for rooms, thus affording a greater uninterrupted sur-

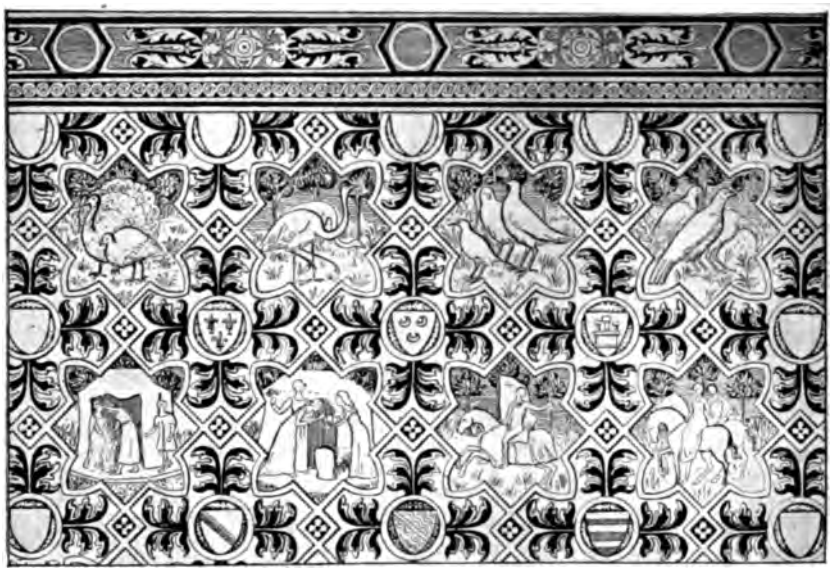
face overhead. The barrel vault was used for passageways and staircases. In the Villa Capponi, at Arcetri, the entrance hall (Plate 62) is barrel-vaulted, while the continuation beyond and the cross hall are cross-vaulted. In this case the cross vaulting is only approximately semi-cylindrical in section, but such irregularities are rather the rule than the exception in old Italian houses, especially old Tuscan houses. There is said to be an ancient Tuscan superstition that the devil can enter only rooms that are absolutely symmetrical in all their measurements, and this belief is sometimes held to account for the amazing inequalities one encounters in measuring the early villas. At the Villa Capponi, for example, there are many rooms without any two sides parallel, as one may see by the ground floor plan (Plate 59). Whether or not the superstition alluded to be really one of the causes, the same condition obtains elsewhere to a degree sufficient to drive a Beaux Arts-trained architect distracted.

Ceilings and walls were either left plain or else received a polychrome decoration, in whole or in part. As early as the end of the thirteenth century we know from a passage in Dante's *Vita Nuova,* alluding to a room surrounded by a picture, that it was not unusual to decorate walls with frescoes. Boccaccio also makes frequent allusion to rooms adorned with frescoes. By the end of the fourteenth century we know that the practice was firmly established. Such mural paintings may be divided into several categories—geometrical *motifs,* decorations executed in free-hand designs, single figures, and scenes and histories introducing many personages.

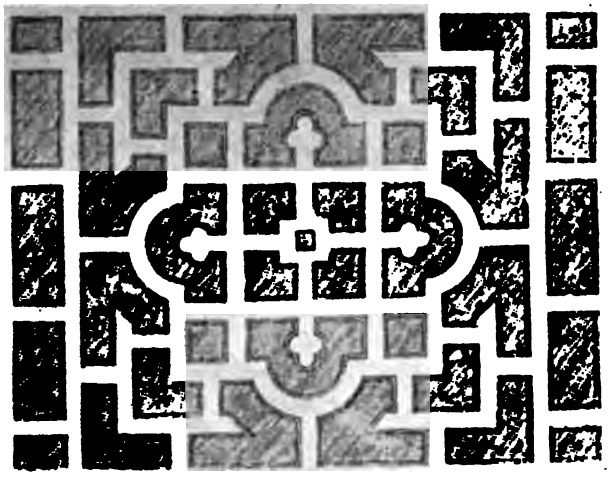
Amongst the geometrical *motifs* one finds such patterns as chevrons or herring-bone bands of alternate green and violet, or violet and blue; patterns of interlacing lines and curves in arrangements of more or less intricacy and wrought in sundry colours; and divers combinations of quatrefoils, squares, rosettes and bands. A bit of such wall decoration appears in one of the illustrations of the Villa Palmieri. The mural paintings shewn at Cafaggiuolo

SECTION OF FOURTEENTH CENTURY GEOMETRICAL WALL PAINTING—VILLA PALMIERI, SAN DOMENICO, NEAR FLORENCE

EARLY FIFTEENTH CENTURY CREDENZA WITH INTARSIA DECORATION
LA PIETRA, IL PELLEGRINO, FLORENCE



SECTION OF FOURTEENTH CENTURY WALL PAINTING FROM HOUSE FORMERLY IN MERCATO VECCHIO FLORENCE—NOW IN MUSEUM OF SAN MARCO



GEOMETRICAL GARDEN PLAN—FROM "L'ARCHITETTURA" OF SERLIO

(Plates 115 and 116) are not the original decorations, but restorations carefully executed after old models. Incidentally they illustrate the manner in which it was customary to introduce heraldic bearings. Sometimes the whole wall surface was divided up into squares like a chequer board with armorial blasonings in alternating squares, the other spaces being filled with geometrical *motifs*.

At times the whole ceiling, starting from the spring of the pendentives at the corbels, would be painted blue and powdered over with stars and fleur-de-lys of gold, with shields here and there bearing the arms of the family and its connexions. Again, the spandrels between the arches of the vaulting might be filled with conventional or geometrical devices while the uninterrupted field of the ceiling above would be devoted to the depiction of some large subject.

Amongst the designs executed free hand one may find such schemes as different sorts of emblems and foliage combined with geometrical bands; thin red lines dividing the wall space into squares in which stand out bunches of conventional flowers, alternately green and bluish on a grey ground, or green on a light ground; a composition of trees and painted draperies consisting of a succession of the richest mantles of miniver fastened up around the entire room in the manner of magnificent hangings, a garden of flowers stretching away behind the suspended mantles, and in the farther distance trees with close-clipped foliage, laden with fruit, amongst whose branches flit little birds of gayest plumage. Such was a typical *motif* of decoration which admitted of numerous variations. Sometimes, instead of miniver, the mantles are of blue stuff powdered with silver fleur-de-lys, or brown bedecked with vine tendrils or embellished with shields; sometimes the draperies hang from horizontal rods supported by hooks attached to the trunks of the trees; sometimes they are fastened to the wall at regular intervals folding between one point and another in the manner of ample festoons. And the trees stand forth now against a clear sky, now under the arches of an elegant loggia. Not infre-

quently a mural scheme of this sort is surmounted by a frieze of foliage, legend bearing scrolls and shields. With the other previously mentioned schemes, likewise, a frieze was often used, especially when there was a flat beamed ceiling.

At other times the decoration might take the form of landscapes or garden scenes. A fragment of such a garden scene, though faint, is still discernible within the loggia of the Villetta at San Domenico (Plate 88). The garden is surrounded by an hedge or vine-clad wall with undulating top, surmounted by pots with laurel trees or box, and on the greensward disports itself a large white animal too indistinct to classify. In the lunettes within the same loggia are painted shields encircled with wreaths and backed by a composition of ribbons, fruit and flowers. In short, there was no end to the diversity of free-hand schemes employed, nor to the degree of richness that might be expressed. The treatment of single figures and historic scenes is sufficiently obvious so that no detailed discussion is necessary.

The decoration of trees and draperies sometimes covered the entire wall, sometimes only the upper part, while the lower part was decorated with a dado of wood or with another painting of different character, as, for example, a pattern of interlacing red and blue lines on a grey ground. The mention of this device brings us to the whole subject of dados.

Very often the walls were faced or lined with wood to the height of three *braccia* or more, and this facing, called a *spalliera,* served as both a back and background for certain pieces of furniture, such as beds, couches, benches, cupboards and chests that were set against it. In the fourteenth century the dados were for the most part of simple character, but in the fifteenth they were often enriched with elaborate mouldings and inlay and became an important item in the decoration of a room. In order to render the dados even more ornate it was not an uncommon thing to enclose painted panels between the stiles and rails, and on these panels some of the most renowned artists bestowed their efforts. When

the *spalliera* of wood was unadorned it was possible to leave the rest of the wall space above it the plain colour of the plaster, but when this dado was enriched with intarsia or painting the laws of good taste and proportion demanded a corresponding degree of decoration above it, not less sumptuous but somewhat different and of sufficient contrast in character. Such decoration might consist of frescoes, of tapestries, or of a series of larger painted panels enclosed within stiles and rails of wood, inlaid or carved and picked out with gilding, thus actually forming a continuous panelling extending all the way to the ceiling.

How excellent many of these mural decorations must have been we may well imagine when we remember that the greatest artists of the day thought no scorn of working upon them and lavished their genius in making the rooms glow with wealth of colour and grace of form. How glorious were some of the villas we may conjecture from the two frescoes (now in the Louvre) which Botticelli wrought on the wall of one of the rooms in the Villa Lemmi, near Careggi, on the occasion of Giovanna degli Albizzi's marriage with Lorenzo Tornabuoni in 1486. And Botticelli's commission was only one of many similar instances in which other artists figured.

The wooden ceilings were of two kinds, the real and the false. The former actually supported the weight of the floor above and displayed the structural beams and joists. The latter was contrived for decorative values and displayed a deeply coffered surface; its function was purely ornamental and not structural as it was attached to the true ceiling above. In the true ceilings colour and gilding were applied to the beams and joists and to the corbels supporting the beams while the natural surface of the boarding above was for the most part undecorated. Sometimes the whole beam would be painted in pure colours with conventional patterns, at other times only the edges of the beams would be embellished.

The second class of ceilings were much more ornate in

composition. Oftentimes they were richly carved in addition to being painted and gilt, and in the centre of each coffer would appear a carved rosette or some other bit of conventional sculpture. Besides all this combination of rich carving and resplendent colour and gilding, it was customary for a ceiling of this sort to be supported by an equally rich cornice.

In the foregoing chapters adequate mention has been made of the richly carved fireplaces and doorways, wrought in *pietra serena* and sometimes picked out with a little red or blue and a few touches of gilding, but it remains to take note of the doors themselves. These were often divided into square panels, usually five to each leaf, and embellished with a delicate inlay. The inside shutters of the windows were likewise not seldom thus enriched. The casements were commonly glazed with small roundels or bulls-eyes.

Tapestries, and wall hangings of serge or of heavy linen stuff, wrought and painted in divers colours and patterns, were used to a considerable extent, sometimes to cover a large wall space, sometimes to cover only a small area back of a chest or bench. The exact manner, or rather the variety of manners, in which these hangings were customarily used can be more satisfactorily gathered from a study of the contemporary paintings than in any other way. At the same time, it must be borne in mind that it was the custom of the period to use a great number of hangings and draperies in a great number of places to mark festal occasions while under ordinary circumstances most of them would be folded up and put away. Velvets, silks, brocades and damasks were used to some extent and embroideries also. The employment of such sumptuous decorations increased during the sixteenth century. Leather, stamped in rich patterns and embellished with colour and gilt or silver, was likewise occasionally used.

With reference to the brick floors, already noticed, it should be added that the shape and arrangement of the bricks were not always the same. Besides the large oblong

bricks, previously mentioned, large square bricks often served for paving. Again, some floors were composed of little square and hexagonal bricks laid in a geometrical design, while the decorative effect was sometimes heightened by using both red and cream coloured bricks in alternating sequence. In other schemes of paving the bricks were laid in parallel lines, or in circles, or herring-bone wise. In addition to the brick paving, there occurred now and again floors of marble, of a few varying colours, executed in a large and simple geometrical design. Still other floors were laid with brightly coloured glazed tiles, decorated with more or less elaborate patterns of interlacing lines or, perhaps, with heraldic figures. Late in the fifteenth century were introduced maiolica tiles with more open designs. Notwithstanding the divers flooring possibilities just enumerated, however, the ordinary large oblong bricks were employed in the majority of cases.

In settings like these described, the customary complement of movable furniture included such articles as *cassoni* or chests, cupboards, benches, *credenze,* tables, stools and chairs. At first glance this may seem but a meagre inventory, but it should be borne in mind that each article mentioned in reality appeared under a considerable diversity of forms. Of *cassoni,* for example, there were numerous varieties of shapes and sizes; there were equally numerous modes of decoration, and they served the widest possible range of purposes. Apart from their diversity of size and shape, some stood flat on the floor with only a moulded base, others had feet, and some were raised on stands. All served as receptacles for one thing or another, but besides this they supplied ample seating accommodation and the longer sort were not infrequently used as beds or couches. They were made of walnut, when they were to be carved or inlaid, and of the "meaner" woods, such as pine or cypress, when they were to be painted or covered with *pastiglia* decorations, a form of stucco or composition embellishment in low relief to which colour and gilding were applied.

The fifteenth and early sixteenth century painted *cassoni* were often masterpieces of art when Botticelli, Andrea del Sarto, Pesellino, Piero di Cosimo and the ablest of their pupils worked upon them. The *cassoni* enriched with carving or intarsia were often wrought with equal cunning and presented a no less splendid appearance. Intarsia work was in high favour during the fifteenth century, but as the sixteenth century advanced the preference seems to have swerved more to carving. The character of the carving, too, changed somewhat as the sixteenth century wore on—the relief was bolder and more assertive and although the workmanship was of the finest quality, there was some loss of the delicate refinement that characterised the earlier pieces. What has been said specifically of *cassoni* also applies in a comprehensive way to the other usual articles of furniture as well.

Before the sixteenth century chairs were not nearly so numerous as they were at a later period. The types usually occurring before the Cinquecento were the *sedia Dantesca* or the *sedia Savonarola,* which had arms, and the armless *sgabello,* which was really a sort of glorified milking stool with an high back and profuse enrichment of carving. Stools and benches and the tops of *cassoni* afforded most of the seating accommodation. In the Cinquecento, however, chairs became increasingly numerous. The high and straight-backed armchairs, with straight arms, runner feet, square seats covered with velvet, and a piece of velvet stretched between the backposts, are one of the types we always associate with this era. There are some who think they appear uncomfortable. They *are* uncomfortable if not used aright. They were designed to be used with footstools, and when so used they prove exceedingly comfortable.

There was one quality that Renaissance Italian furniture possessed in an eminent degree. It was essentially adaptable and always looked equal to the occasion whether it stood against a severely plain and austere background or whether it was placed in a sumptuous environment. In the former

case it had sufficient substance and dignity to impart elegance to the entire composition; in the latter, it was rich enough or possessed of sufficient contrast to make it fit in perfectly as a part of the scheme. Even the simpler pieces, made by nameless craftsmen, were informed by the same spirit of refinement and just proportion. In this connexion one cannot do better than remember what John Addington Symonds wrote *à propos* of the innate sense of beauty with which the whole nation appears at this time to have been endowed. "The speech of the Italians at that epoch," he observes, "their social habits, their ideals of manners, their standard of morality, the estimate they formed of men, were alike conditioned and qualified by art. It was an age of splendid ceremonies and magnificent parade, when the furniture of houses, the armour of soldiers, the dress of citizens, the pomp of war, and the pageantry of festivals were invariably and inevitably beautiful. On the meanest articles of domestic utility, cups and platters, door panels and chimney-pieces, coverlets for beds and lids of linen chests, a wealth of artistic invention was lavished by innumerable craftsmen, no less skilled in technical details than distinguished by rare taste."

Of the seventeenth century and its modes of decoration not a little was said in Chapter III. Some further reference, however, must be made to the lavish stucco embellishments which it was the custom of the period to apply to walls and ceilings. Adroit as some of these intricate decorations were in execution, and excellent as their modelling often was, the innate Italian love of colour sought satisfaction in applying pigment and gilding to the forms produced by the *stuccatore*. Some of the results effected by this means were truly admirable and of imposing magnificence; others were overdone and merely "splendacious"; others, again, afforded amusing instances of how the stucco craftsman, led astray by the tempting and dangerous facility in manipulating a newfound toy, might be betrayed into startling absurdities.

As a case in point, there is a ceiling in a certain villa near

Florence in the decoration of which *stuccatore* and painter have vied with each other over a piece of extremely complex composition. The painter in executing a large panel inadvertently ran into a snag. An adipose cupid, reclining upon a bed of clouds and flowers was threatened with the amputation of one of his feet by the stucco frame enclosing the panel. Thereupon the *stuccatore* obligingly added a plaster ancle and foot which nonchalantly project into space.

The doors of this period, no less than those of a preceding age, offered an inviting field to the decorator and some of the results achieved in this direction were really admirable in their effect. On one side, panels enclosed by heavy mouldings often contained small landscapes of excellent quality; on the other, the plain battened surface was covered with an engaging pattern of foliage and birds.

In this period, too, must be noted the prevalence of large and richly framed mirrors, intricately devised sconces with crystal pendants, and imposing crystal chandeliers which occupied places of honour in the centres of lofty hallways or *saloni*.

The movable furniture was no less impressive in character than were the fixed surroundings. The greatly increased use of upholstery and voluminous hangings at doors and windows augmented the note of grandiose brilliance which, in turn, was enhanced by the heavily carved and gilt frames of the large pictures with which the walls were hung. The *cassone* was no longer a favourite and much used piece of furniture, but its place was taken by a multitude of costly cabinets, escritoires and wardrobes, while the seating accommodation that it had erstwhile afforded was supplied by innumerable chairs and settees or sofas, many of which were upholstered in gorgeous damasks or with stamped leather. At the same time, an wholly new vocabulary of decorative *motifs*, or new adaptations of old ones, imparted an aspect to seventeenth century rooms utterly dissimilar from those of the Renaissance epoch.

CHAPTER V

GARDENS EARLY AND LATE

HE garden was and is an essential part of the Tuscan villa. However the size of the garden may vary, its presence is indispensable. It must, therefore, receive its due measure of attention if one is to form anything like a complete conception of our subject. Although the gardens, as we find them to-day, are full of charm and bear a distinctive character, whether they be large or small, it must be understood that their present appearance in most cases differs widely from their aspect in early times.

In some instances restorations have been effected—conscientiously carried out according to the precedents of primitive tradition; in others, despite the modifications wrought in the lapse of time by changing garden ideals, traces of the ancient scheme are still discernible; in a great number of others, however, the visible records of early garden craft have been either wholly obliterated or so much altered by later manipulation that we now behold little save the contrivances of a period when foreign practices had attained an undue ascendancy. Barring a comparatively few examples, more or less well known, the earliest Tuscan gardens that are virtually intact date from the seventeenth century, and in not a few of even these may be found the evidences of subsequent alteration that one cannot but regret.

The foreign influence just alluded to which wrought such havoc to Italian gardens, not only in Tuscany but elsewhere also, and snuffed out for the time being the traditional methods of Italian garden design, was the craze for the *giardino inglese*. This passion for the "English garden" spread to France and then throughout the length and breadth of Italy, like a pestilent epidemic, leaving a trail of infection as it went. Consequently, during its dominance in the late

eighteenth century and still more in the fore part of the nineteenth, innumerable fine old formal gardens were sacrificed to the insensate behests of current fashion and a pernicious obsession, on the part of their owners, to bring them into accord with the mischievous theories of artificial landscaping or " natural gardening " for which " Capability " Brown had been mainly responsible in the first instance.

It is quite bad enough and sad enough to think of the many fair gardens in England that were ruthlessly destroyed to make way for insipid landscapes and grotesque wildernesses upon Brown's rise to popularity in the mid-eighteenth century. When to this chronicle of systematic vandalism we add the tale of ruin compassed in Italy by the emulators of Brown and his school, one's wrathful regret knows no bounds. The kindly hand of time, it is true, and luxuriant growth together have accomplished much to assuage the bitterness of a long past catastrophe, but the haunting thought remains of what might have been had not the fallacy of the *giardino inglese* and later fallacies emanating from the same source seized the owners of so many Italian villas.

Fortunately, by recourse to certain reliable sources, we can pretty accurately envision the villa gardens as they were prior to the late sixteenth century or the beginning of the seventeenth. These sources include (1) contemporary descriptions and specific literary allusions; (2) contemporary paintings; (3) the text and illustrations of fifteenth and sixteenth century books treating in some measure of the art of garden design; (4) the body of general knowledge concerning Classical allusions to garden matters and Classical descripions of gardens; and, (5) finally, the remnants of early garden work still remaining to us.

Before examining the testimony supplied by these sources of information, however, it will be in order to sum up the conception of a garden that obtained in Mediæval and Renaissance Italy. First and foremost, a garden was an enclosed place that afforded protection and privacy. For such garden traditions as were kept alive during the troublous

Middle Ages we must thank the monastic establishments. There the gardens were primarily of utilitarian intent, and though some slight attention may have been paid now and then to the culture of flowers and shrubbery, the element of æsthetic satisfaction, when it was considered at all, was altogether subordinated to the more prosaic requirements of cultivating vegetables and simples or, if space permitted, the additional enterprise of growing a little fruit. Secular gardens followed the fashion of the monastic gardens.

It was the most natural thing in the world, however, that the appeal of nature and the open should be keenly felt and that the element of delight the secular garden afforded should be more and more emphasised by the introduction of features that would minister to the possessor's pleasure. When thus by little and little the secular garden had acquired a definite and distinct status as a place of recreation and delight, apart from its erstwhile purely utilitarian function, it was looked upon as a bit of nature tamed and made companionable, a bit of outdoors domesticated and made fit and accessible for daily or hourly human retreat and occupancy. It was inseparably associated with the dwelling, and by virtue of this inseparable association and its middle ground, its transitional stage, between house and outer world, it was manifestly appropriate that nature should be restrained, ordered and embellished by man's art. It was evident that by such ordering and restraint the greatest benefit and pleasure could be derived from the garden space.

This intimate conception of the garden as a thing to be lived with and lived in on friendly terms, a thing responsive to loving personal care and unremitting culture, rather than an impersonal, half-wild thing to be admired from a distance—a thing in which the element of personal care and affection played no conscious part—prevailed during all the age of true Italian gardening. Even the Baroque Age, with its broad, expansive schemes and bold planning for effect, witnessed no radical alteration of this conception, but rather

a logical amplification of it. The personal connexion and the essential fact of the garden's ministry to personal requirements were still plainly obvious and fundamental motives. There was merely an expansion of scale and an adaptation of uninterrupted tradition to the increased amplitude in standards of living. The groves, alleys, and *boschi* that were introduced were only accessory extensions and incidental to the general scheme without affecting the primary conception. It was not until the passion for the *giardino inglese* spread over the country that the theories of "natural gardening" were injected as an alien influence into Italian tradition, an influence that caused its misguided devotees to set a premium upon laboured disorder and disjointed irregularities, upon feeble imitations of untamed nature, and meretricious, stage-set shams masquerading as the handiwork of God.

Let us now turn for a moment to our sources for the reconstruction of the early Renaissance garden. Boccaccio's description of the garden of the Villa Palmieri in 1348, contained in the narrative of the Third Day, indicates that it was indeed a pleasant place. He describes a walled garden, "coasting on one side of the Pallace, and round enclosed with high mounted walles." Therein were "walkes and allyes" long and spacious, "yet directly straite as an arrow, environed with spreading vines, whereon the grapes hung in copious clusters." In other words, there were arbours or pergolas. "In the middest of the Garden, was a square plot, after the resemblance of a Meadow, flourishing with high grasse, hearbes, and plants, beside a thousand diversities of flowres." There were also orange trees set about in the familiar manner, just as lemon trees and orange trees are set about in pots to-day. There was also a "Fountaine of white Marble" with a gush of water, and there were other plays of water besides. In short, he is describing a formal parterre, with geometrically arranged flower borders and a central fountain, such as we see in contemporary paintings.

EARLY RENAISSANCE GARDEN SCENE WITH "BARREL TOPPED" PERGOLA, ARCADE, FOUNTAIN AND FLOWERED LAWN—SCHOOL OF BOTTICELLI, UFFIZI GALLERIES, FLORENCE

"BARREL-TOPPED" PERGOLA, ON MARBLE COLUMNS—FROM THE HYPNEROTOMACHIA POLIPHILI OF FRANCESCO COLONNA

Photograph by Alinari

FOUNTAIN OF VENUS, BY TRIBOLO AND GIOVANNI DI BOLOGNA—VILLA PETRAIA, SESTO.

Photograph by Alinari

FOUNTAIN BY VEROCCHIO AND TADDA—IN THE PALAZZO VECCHIO, FLORENCE, FORMERLY AT CAFAGGIUOLO.

A little that is more definitely germane to our particular subject may be gathered from Pietro Crescenzi, whose *Opus Ruralium Commodorum,* founded upon the works of Cato, Varro, Columella, and his own personal observation, though written in the fourteenth century, was not printed till 1471. In the eighth chapter, wherein the author writes of the laying out of gardens, he recommends that small orchards and gardens of fruit trees and herbs pleasing to the sight be square in shape; that they have borders planted with every sort of sweet-scented herb; that the paths be of grass, while round about and against the wall should be an high bank of earth, arranged as a seat and covered with turf and blossoming plants; and that pergolas supporting vines be employed to give a cool and grateful shade. He suggests that "in the middle of the lawn there should be no trees, but the fresh level of the grass left alone in a pure and glad air, and if possible a clear fountain, to add pleasure and gaiety by its beauty." For the gardens of ordinary persons Crescenzi advises, besides, a surrounding hedge and likewise an arbour or trellis bower "like unto a pavilion." He also contemplates a geometrical plan and intersecting paths. With his suggestions for the equipment of royal gardens we need not at this point concern ourselves.

The description of Bernardo Rucellai's garden at Quaracchi, near Florence, in the latter part of the fifteenth century tells us of "a pergola, with espaliers of box, which goes from the entrance gate," and of a "great viale, straight and shaded by trees, which goes to the Arno"—these were the principal features of the composition; of a fish-pond, an aspen grove, and an orderly plantation of fir-trees; of pergolas or arbours with both rounded tops and pointed or gabled tops; of "oratories" and garden houses; of hedges of flowers and espaliers of shrubbery, of garden seats, of the glowing colours of roses, red and white, and of sundry other flowers besides; of a loggetta by the gate, of vases for flowers, of carefully arranged vistas, of works of topiary art; of a

labyrinth, and of a little green mount or hillock whence one might overlook the garden.

A careful comparison of the other gardens of the period, besides disclosing the presence of such features as those just enumerated, shews an endeavour to marshal the various important items that enter into the composition and serve as the garden's major adornments along the same axial line; the first successful management of different garden levels by means of terraces and steps, and the resulting contrivance of hanging gardens, such as those of the Villa Medici, at Fiesole, or at Poggio a Cajano; besides the fountains, already mentioned, the employment of other architectonic forms—the loggetta, the loggia, the pavilion of one type or another, and the pergola with columns; the frequent use of plastic forms, such as ancient statuary, highly ornamental vases and pots for flowers, balustrades, and marble seats of sundry patterns and various degrees of elaboration; careful consideration of the aspect of the surrounding country in relation to the placing of the garden and with reference to the panoramic views to be obtained; and, finally, the appearance of divers surprises and pretty conceits, such as " secret gardens," fanciful topiary works, labyrinths, belvederes, little mounts to command views, and islets in miniature lakes.

Not only do the paintings of masters like Giotto, Fra Angelico, Ghirlandajo, Benozzo Gozzoli, Pinturicchio, Botticelli, Botticini, Boccati, Mantegna and many more fully confirm the existence of all the particulars that have been noted and shew how they were used, but the illuminations in breviaries, missals and other books add ample and explicit corroboration. For example, the Grimani Breviary depicts a walled flower garden with regularly disposed rectangular beds separated by narrow paths, standard trees trimmed by the topiarist into formal shapes, and pots of flowers characteristically set atop the wall. Again, a bit of ancient and half-obliterated fresco (Plate 88) from the loggia walls in the Villetta, at the Villa Palmieri, shews a section of garden wall surmounted by an ornamental vase

EARLY RENAISSANCE WALLED GARDEN WITH FOUNTAIN—FROM THE BIBLIOTECA ESTENSE, MODENA

EARLY RENAISSANCE WALLED GARDEN WITH PERGOLA, ARBOUR, FOUNTAIN AND SEATS—FROM PIETRO CRESCENZI'S "AGRICOLTURA"

Photograph by Alinari

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY FOUNTAIN AND STEPS—VILLA CORSINI, CASTELLO

GEOMETRICAL GARDEN PLAN WITH GRASS, FLOWER BEDS AND PATHS—FROM THE HYPNEROTOMACHIA POLIPHILI OF FRANCESCO COLONNA

containing a clipped box-tree, inside the wall a thick hedge whose undulating top is trimmed in the traditional Tuscan manner, while in the foreground a nondescript white animal disports itself upon a lawn besprinkled with flowers.

Amongst the fifteenth and sixteenth century authors who mention garden design, three shed especially valuable light upon the subject—Leon Battista Alberti, in his *De Re Aedificatoria,* Francesco Colonna, in his *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili,* and Serlio, in his *Architettura.* The laying out of gardens and their appropriate architectural adornments are discussed, and we are furnished with numerous illustrations of topiary work, treillage, arbours, garden seats and similar embellishments as well as plans for geometrical designs to be executed as parterres. Rustic grottoes, adorned with pebble and shellwork, fountains and statuary, are also considered and advice given relative to their placing and construction.

Some of the gardens illustrated in this volume will aid the reader materially in forming a conception of early Renaissance conditions, but care must be taken to distinguish the ancient features from those of more recent contrivance. At Cigliano the raised beds along the walls and before the house, retained by low stone copings covered with ivy, belong to the ancient scheme and are the direct descendants of the old Roman *torus* or raised bed—the selfsame feature alluded to by Pietro Crescenzi as "an high bank of earth, arranged as a seat and covered with turf and blossoming plants." These raised beds were unquestionably, at one time, used as seats as contemporary paintings and illuminations shew. The great pool at Cigliano also belongs to the original scheme.

The box parterre or pleasaunce in front of the Villetta (Plate 83), at the Villa Palmieri, and the walled box garden at the side of the house, graced in the centre by a fish-pool, faithfully represent the geometrical methods of the early Renaissance. One of the simplest of these geometrical plans—a lawn intersected by straight, box-edged paths con-

verging to the centre—may be seen in the cloister of San Lorenzo, in Florence. Good examples of the same geometrical arrangement are also to be seen in the box pleasaunce and in the middle and lower gardens of the Villa Capponi (Plate 59). A similar instance likewise occurs in the garden at Le Corti. The box parterre at the Villa Palmieri (Plates 243 and 244) shews a somewhat more elaborate interpretation of the same method.

In the little flower gardens at Belcaro (Plate 171) and the Villa Celsa (Plate 98) we see the time-honoured geometrical system applied to the disposition of the flower plots or borders. It must be admitted, even by those who have little sympathy with such methods of planning, that the scheme followed has the manifest advantage of getting the greatest possible results out of a limited space.

What the old garden arrangements were like at Poggio a Cajano and Cafaggiuolo may be gathered to some extent from the respective illustrations which are reproduced from old paintings. Since the paintings were executed considerable alterations in garden treatment have occurred at both places.

At Vicobello, which was originally planned by Baldassare Peruzzi, we find exemplified a more extensive scheme much of which still remains intact (Plates 180–184). Special attention should be paid to the beautiful well in the courtyard (Plate 175) and to the garden gate with the tribune at the far end of the walk, backed by a clump of cypresses (Plate 177) and on axis with the gate—all parts of the original design planned to produce a strongly dramatic effect, a result achieved in a simple, masterly and most gratifying manner.

The Villa Garzoni, at Collodi, La Pietra, Cetinale, the Villa Corsi-Salviati, and Poggio Torselli all exemplify seventeenth century methods and ideals. Of these the Villa Garzoni, at Collodi, furnishes the most representative instance of a large scheme (Plates 261-269) boldly carried out with cascades, fountains, terraces, steps, balustrades,

statuary, pots, topiary work and *parterres de broderie.* All of these features are fully considered in the detailed description of the villa. The gardens of the Villa Corsi-Salviati (Plates 270-279), at Sesto, though rich in charm, are less extensive than those at Collodi and have not the same advantage of greatly diversified levels. At La Pietra (Plates 216–221) seventeenth century methods are admirably carried out in a conscientious restoration. The old garden had been destroyed to make way for a *giardino inglese* of great extent, but fortunately the traces of the original work had not been wholly obliterated so that the present owner has been able to restore the estate to substantially its pristine condition.

A careful study of these gardens and the manner of their making should be sufficient to convince the reader of the intrinsic soundness and value of the ideals embodied, and to dispel the notion, unfortunately still too prevalent, that the old Italian methods of gardening were based on essentially false conceptions and replete with a cold, starched formality.

CIGLIANO, SAN CASCIANO, VAL DI PESA

CIGLIANO, near the little town of San Casciano, overlooking the Val di Pesa, is a singularly valuable and striking example of the early Renaissance Tuscan villa in that it retains all the characteristic features of the villa life of the period and, with one exception, has experienced no substantial change since about the end of the *quattrocento* when the house assumed the form in which we see it to-day.

Late in the Middle Ages Cigliano belonged to the Bondi, and how much of a dwelling then was there, or of exactly what appearance it was, we have no means of knowing. After the Bondi the Guidetti had it, and after the Guidetti the Cinelli, from whom it passed to the Florentine Senator, Alessandro di Niccolò Antinori, who rebuilt the house virtually as it now stands. Since his time Cigliano has remained in the possession of the Antinori family, the present owner, the Marchese Lodovico Antinori, having made it his favourite place of abode.

The same Alessandro di Niccolò Antinori who rebuilt Cigliano, built also the beautiful Palazzo Antinori in Florence after the design of Giuliano da Sangallo, and likewise the Villa delle Rose, near Galluzzo. It is thus quite evident that Cigliano is entitled to be regarded as typical of the country residences which the wealthy Florentine nobility of that period established for themselves.

Alessandro di Niccolò was a close friend of Cosimo de' Medici, the first Grand Duke of Tuscany, and a member of his Secret Council. He took to wife Giovanna Tornabuoni and as a reminder of this union there are still to be seen the two maiolica roundels affixed to the wall of the *cortile* (Plate 5) at Cigliano above the arches of the loggia. These polychrome roundels, encircled by garlands of fruit and foliage, are attributed to Giovanni della Robbia, the one bearing the arms of the Antinori, the other the arms of the Tornabuoni.

The one change alluded to in the outward aspect of Cigliano occurred during the ownership of Niccolò Francesco Antinori, the trusted friend and adviser of Cosimo III., de' Medici. As a courtier and much-travelled diplomat one can readily understand that Niccolò Francesco would be affected by the prevalent Baroque taste of his day and would endeavour to bring Cigliano, which was his favourite country residence, into some manner of accord with the current style. This he did, though in a restrained fashion quite free from the more flamboyant flights of the day, by remodelling the south or garden front of the house (Plate 9) to the form it now bears. He also adorned the façade of the *limonaia,* or lemon house, which forms the southern boundary of the walled garden, with vigorous Baroque panelling (Plate 14) in *sgrafitto,* adding urns on the top, and completing the formal treatment by placing an heroic-sized Father Neptune (Plate 13) in a pebble and shell-encrusted niche to play a jet of water into the

great pool or *vasca* (Plates 9 and 14) over which he presides. The present form of the pool also dates from 1691, when these changes were effected.

From the *portone*, or house door (Plates 2, 3 and 4) of the north front, flanked by a *panca*, or low bench (Plate 3) at each side of the steps—always an indication of early work—a vaulted passage (Plate 4) leads into the irregular quadrangle of the stone-paved *cortile* (Plate 5). Here is an ancient well-head (Plates 7 and 8) and, on the south side, a triple-arched loggia. From one of the illustrations it can be seen that wires are so arranged that a canvas awning (Plate 7) can be drawn across the whole *cortile* during the heat of the day, thus following out a traditional usage that seems to have come down from Roman times.

The high, lunette-vaulted and brick paved rooms on the ground floor, with whitewashed walls and beautifully carved stone corbels, are occupied by the family, and also the first floor rooms on the garden front. The rest of the first floor is given over to the house servants, to drying rooms for fruit, and to some of the *contadini* who work on the immediately adjacent parts of the estate. This is quite according to the patriarchal, time-honoured custom of the families who have always lived in their villas themselves, instead of letting them to others, and have preserved the traditional methods of household management, where everything is carried on under the immediate eye of the master.

At the west side (Plate 15), where the ground slopes abruptly away, is the great vaulted *cantina* or store house, under the ground floor—to be explicit, under the dining-room, *salone* or living room, and the western bed chamber. Here the products of the farm are put away. Rows of great earthen "Ali Baba" jars contain the oil. Mighty vats and hogsheads hold the wine, while hams and rashers of bacon depend from the vaulting.

The stuccoed walls of the house are of that indescribable "Tuscan villa colour," as elusive as the hues of the sunset clouds. It is by turn grey, brown, buff, yellow or salmon, according to the light and the texture of the masonry. The shutters are painted green and the window and door trims are of the customary brownish grey *pietra serena*.

About seventy years ago the ancient geometrical lay-out of the garden gave place to the asymmetrical arrangement of a *giardino inglese*, without, however, disturbing the old raised beds or *tori* along the side walls (Frontispiece, and plates 9 and 11) and immediately before the garden front (Plate 10) of the house. Nevertheless, the great pool, the walls, and the ingenious simplicity of garden practice, where rose beds are edged with strawberry plants and espaliered fruit trees grow against the side of the house along with jasmine and climbing roses, maintain the true Tuscan character of the enclosure, which constantly serves as a veritable outdoor living room for the family and their friends who enjoy the happy privilege of a sojourn in this delectable spot which has so faithfully preserved the essential spirit of old Tuscany.

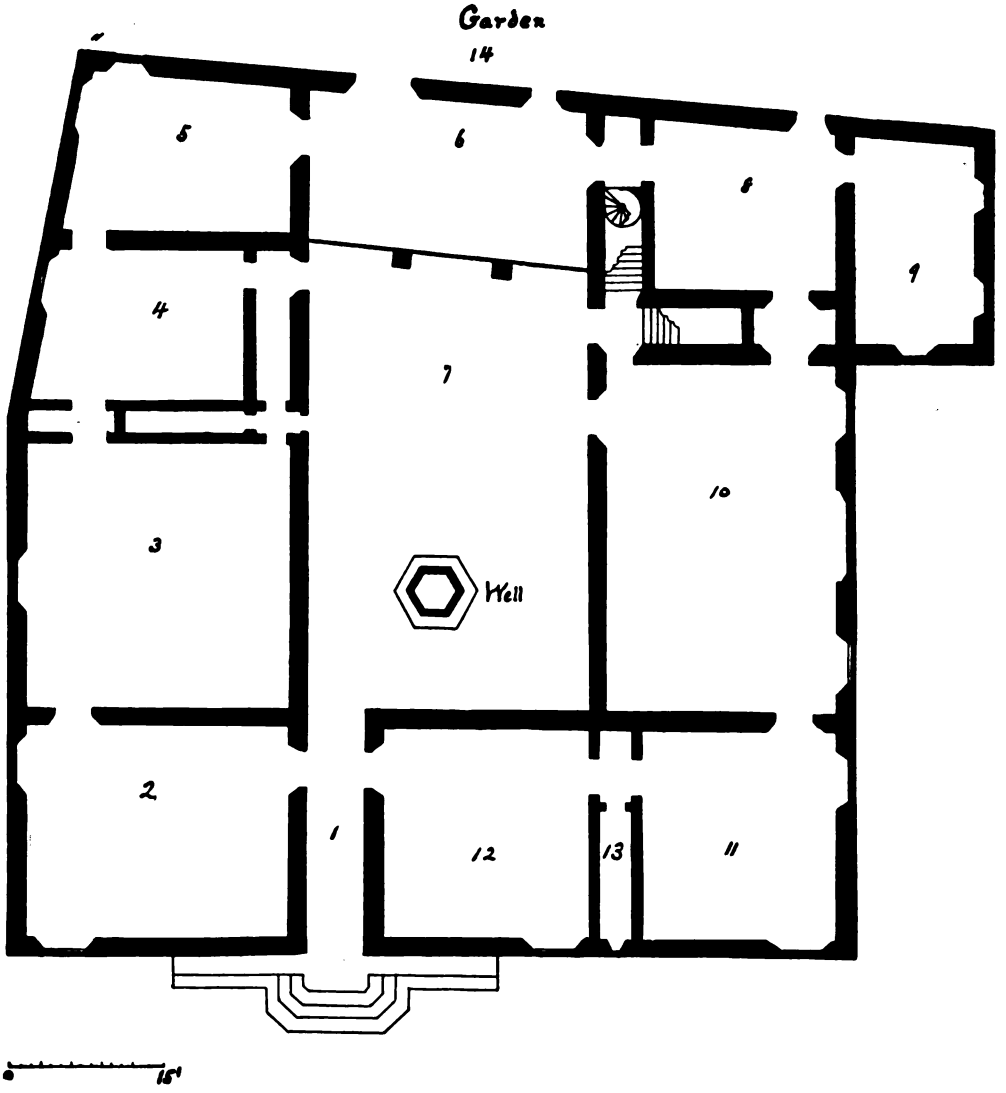


PLATE 1. GROUND FLOOR PLAN—CIGLIANO, SAN CASCIANO, VAL DI PESA

KEY TO PLAN

1. Hallway
2. Study
3. Bedroom
4. Bedroom
5. Sitting Room
6. Loggia
7. Cortile—7a. Well in Cortile
8. Dining Room
9. Boudoir
10. Salone
11. Bedroom
12. Bedroom
13. Bathroom
14. Garden

PLATE 2. NORTH FRONT—CIGLIANO

PLATE 3. NORTH FRONT—CIGLIANO

PLATE 4. PORTONE—CIGLIANO

PLATE 5. LOGGIA IN CORTILE—CIGLIANO

PLATE 6. WINDOW IN LOGGIA—CIGLIANO

PLATE 7. ENTRANCE HALL, FROM CORTILE—CIGLIANO

PLATE 8. WELL HEAD IN CORTILE—CIGLIANO

PLATE 9. SOUTH FRONT AND GARDEN—CIGLIANO

PLATE 10. DETAIL OF SOUTH FRONT AND GARDEN DOOR,—CIGLIANO

PLATE 11. GARDEN GATE, END OF EAST WALK—CIGLIANO

PLATE 12. GATE INTO GARDEN—CIGLIANO

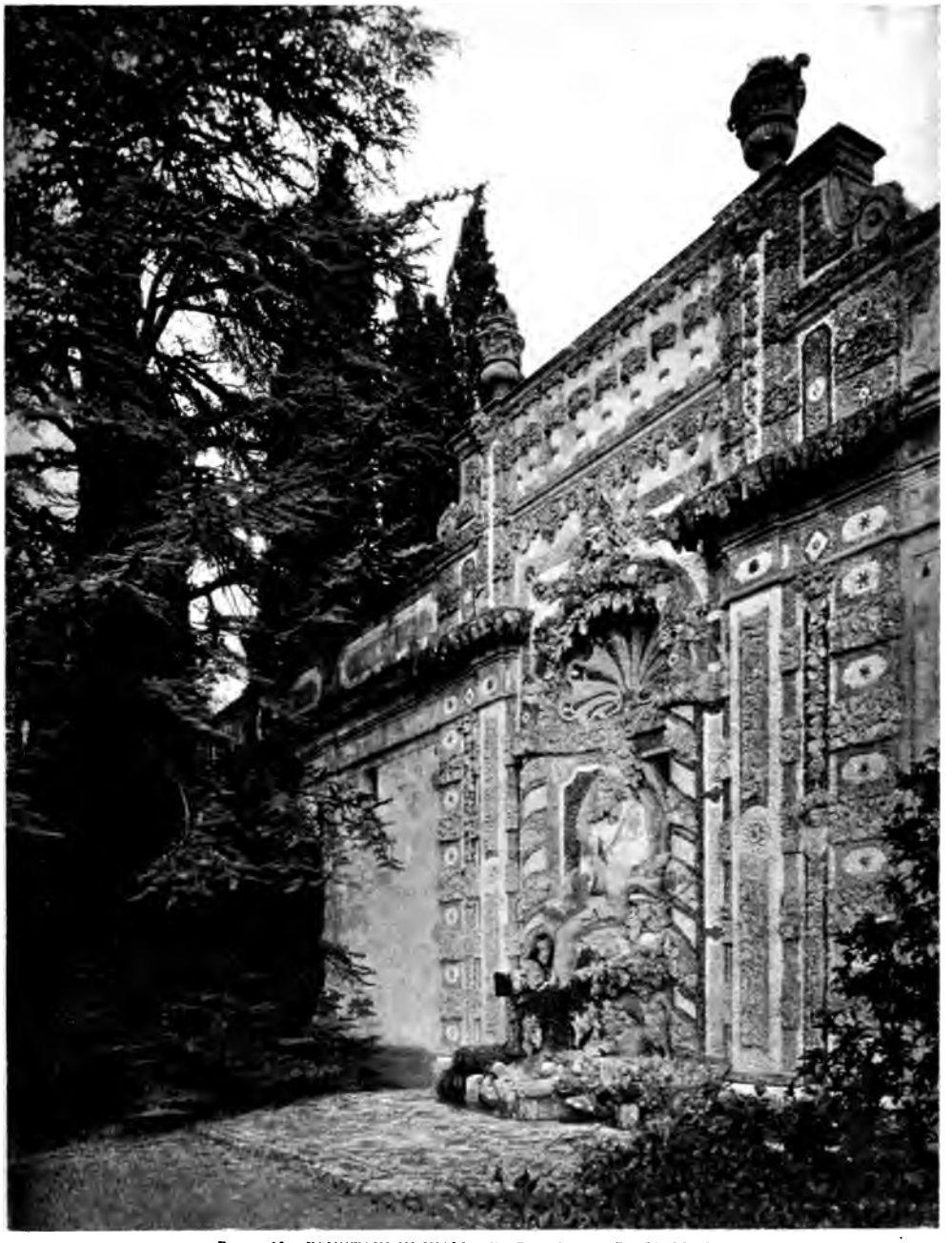


PLATE 13. FOUNTAIN IN WALL OF LEMON HOUSE—CIGLIANO

PLATE 14. POOL AND LEMON HOUSE—CIGLIANO

PLATE 15. WEST SIDE—CIGLIANO

IL GIOJELLO (THE VILLA GALILEO), PIAN DE' GIULLARI

If you leave Florence by the Porta San Miniato, toil up the steep ascent past the wondrous old church of San Miniato al Monte, and follow a winding road still upward toward the south, one of the fairest and most vividly diversified parts of Tuscany unfolds itself to view.

Near the top of the last stretch of hilly road is the little village of Arcetri whose neighbourhood inevitably recalls the memory of Galileo. Throughout the last long climb the Torre del Gallo is in full sight. This stern landmark, which dates from the Middle Ages and takes its name from its ancient owners, the Galli family, according to popular tradition was intimately associated with the closing years of the great astronomer's life. It is said that Galileo, when he was living nearby in " Il Giojello " at Pian de' Giullari, used often to resort to this tower and thence pursue his astronomical observations. This is a pleasing legend to believe, but unfortunately there is reason to question its credibility. When Galileo came to live at Il Giojello he was virtually under sentence of banishment and subjected to close surveillance. Considering these circumstances, it is scarcely likely he could have had either the liberty or the means for continuing those scientific observations that had already cost him endless persecution and brought down upon him severe condemnation from the authorities. Furthermore, at this time he was almost blind. Nevertheless, out of respect for the tradition, Count Paolo Galletti, for many years the owner of the Torre del Gallo, gathered together there an important collection of divers memorials of Galileo.

Turning to the left at Arcetri, after passing the Torre del Gallo, it is but a trifling distance thence into the hamlet of Pian de' Giullari where Il Giojello (Plate 17), known also as the Villa Galileo, fronts on the single street near the little piazza, at the far side of which is L'Ombrellino, a small villa orginally built, as we shall by-and-by see, for an hospice to shelter travellers and pilgrims on their way to the church of Saint Michael the Archangel at Monte Ripaldi.

The name Pian de' Giullari perpetuates the memory of a fascinating bit of history. In the Middle Ages this village seems to have been the favourite place of abode, or at least the favourite place of resort, for the Florentine *giullari* or jesters, who apparently associated themselves in a *mystery* or gild organisation, after the manner commonly employed by the members of one or another craft or calling at that time. In the second volume of his invaluable book, *I Dintorni di Firenze,* Guido Carocci tells us "that the origin of the name is evidently to be sought in the fact that this was the chosen place of the jesters for giving their performances. Varchi attributes the name to the *giullarate* or festivals of buffoonery that were given here

during the Middle Ages; nevertheless, it is clear that in this village there existed a true and properly appointed theatre in which comedy had its beginnings. And the theatre of the jesters was none other than a large room in a villa . . . . . which through all the centuries has always kept the name of *The Theatre.*" Again, in speaking specifically of the villa " Il Teatro," Carocci observes its noteworthy historical importance " because it was here, in a great room on the ground floor, that from the Middle Ages was established that theatre of the jesters from which the name of the place was derived. This room still exists and after so long a tale of centuries the name of *Il Teatro* remains attached to the villa."

Scarcely more than a stone's throw from this ancient seat of Italian comedy lies " Il Giojello," the east or entrance façade of the house fronting on the old Via Imprunetana while the garden wall extends southward for some distance so that the lodge and stable are on the little piazza, just over against " L'Ombrellino," erstwhile the Ospedale della Santissima Trinità.

It is recorded that at the end of the fourteenth century " Il Giojello " belonged to the Masi family of Florence. At the end of the fifteenth century it was sold to the Calderini, and again by them, in 1559, to the Cavalcanti. Subsequently it passed through various hands until Ginevra di Esaù Martellini, November 1, 1631, let it to Galileo di Vincenzo Galilei who thereupon took up his residence. Notwithstanding the restraints imposed upon him and the keeping of a close watch over his movements, previously alluded to, he was permitted to gather his favourite pupils about him from time to time as welcome guests, and, now and again, in addition to these more constant comforters of his exile, came such distinguished visitors and admirers as Evangelista Torricelli and John Milton. Here his troubled life closed at All Hallows, 1642.

Posterity, more mindful of the great astronomer's deserving than the men of his own day and generation, has placed a marble bust of Galileo in a niche in the wall on the road front of the house, and a tablet beneath it commemorates Galileo's occupancy and Milton's visit. Since Galileo's time no significant changes in the structure have taken place. Carocci mentions the house as especially pleasing " for the elegance of its fabric in which appear the graceful and correct forms of the end of the fifteenth century."

As the plans shew (Plate 16), the house is built about three sides of an oblong *cortile* which is open to the south, save for the wall (Plate 18) closing it in from the outer garden and arable ground. Although the present garden within the *cortile* (Plate 20) is not to be ascribed to remote antiquity, nevertheless, the symmetrical arrangement of the beds and walks has fairly well adhered to Renaissance tradition. One of the most engaging features about the *cortile* garden is the well-head in the wall (Plate 21)

at the southeast corner. The well, as one of the illustrations shews, is accessible from outside the *cortile* so that the *contadini* can draw water thence, without entering the enclosure, by mounting the steps and opening the shutters (Plate 19) of the little window in the wall. The plan of the house, according to which the *cortile* is closed in by the structure on three sides, is one of the characteristic arrangements prevailing during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

The ground floor of the southeast wing was orginally a loggia (Plate 21), just as the first floor space above it still is, but it was enclosed at an early date to make additional rooms. A longer loggia extends towards the northeast and shuts in the rear of the house from the road. The small windows like portholes in the north wall (Plate 24) light staircases and cupboards. The walls are of grey stucco and the window and door trims are of the close-grained grey *pietra serena* quarried at Fiesole. In surface the stucco is smooth and easily coated with wash; all the shutters are light green in colour.

There is very little garden space attached to " Il Giojello "—only the small formal plot within the *cortile* and a small stretch beyond the *cortile* wall along the path going down to the *portiere's* lodge beside the gate. Elsewhere the olive orchards and vineyards come close up to the house, as may be seen by the view of the terrace along the northwest side (Plate 23).

On the ground floor the ceilings of the rooms are lunette-vaulted and the corbels at the springs of the vaulting are of simple but exceedingly vigorous design. The floors are paved in the customary way with large, oblong bricks. As was usual in the early period, the staircase is not made a feature of architectural importance. The kitchen is in the basement and the room numbered 2 on the plan is really more of a serving room than a kitchen, although cooking may be done therein.

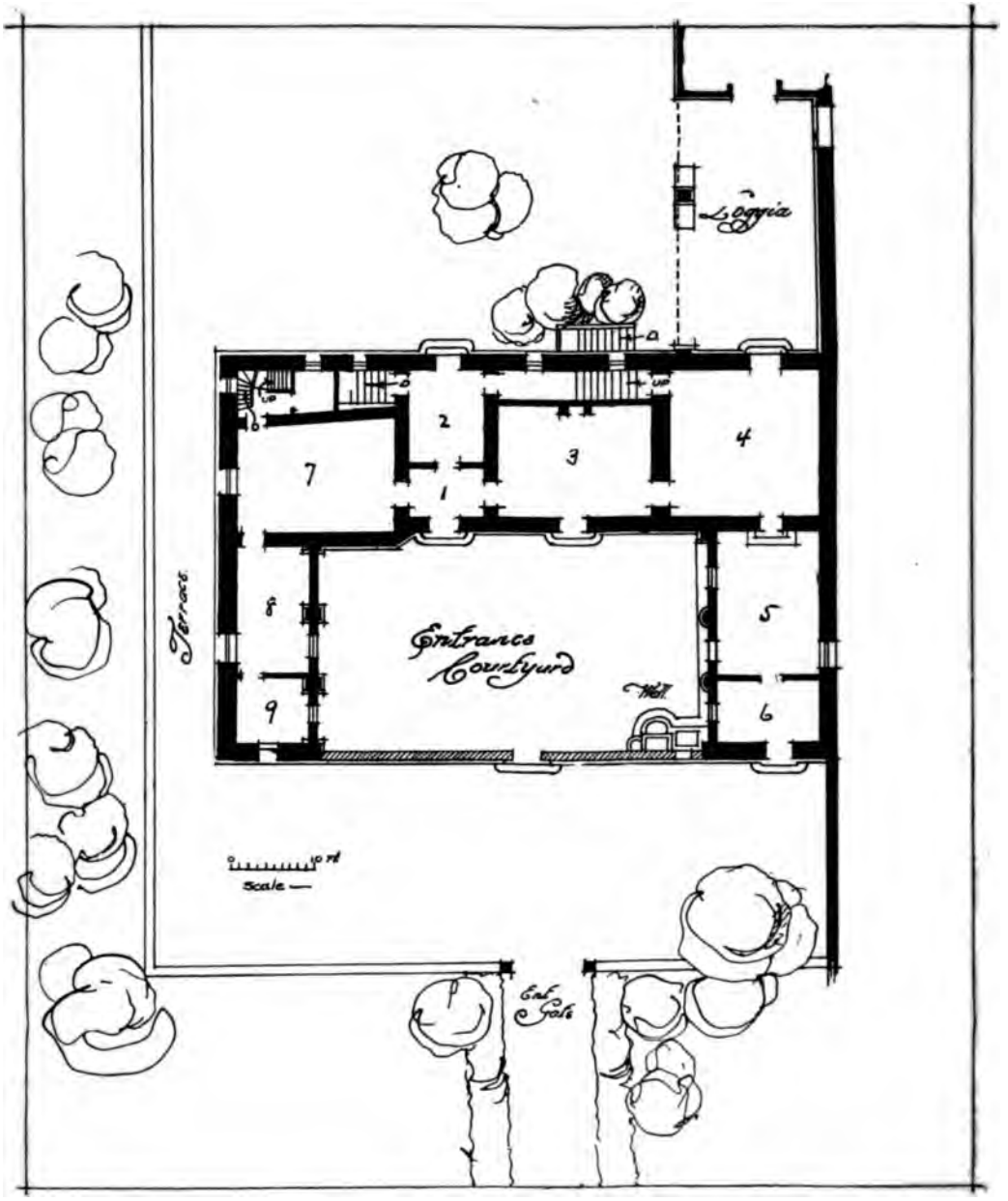


PLATE 16. GROUND FLOOR PLAN—IL GIOJELLO (VILLA GALILEO) PIAN DE' GIULLARI

KEY TO PLAN OF IL GIOJELLO

1. Vestibule
2. Pantry
3. Dining Room
4. Salone
5. Sitting Room
6. Sitting Room
7. Study
8. Library
9. Study

PLATE 17. ROAD FRONT AND ENTRANCE—IL GIOJELLO, (VILLA GALILEO)

PLATE 18. APPROACH FROM GARDEN TO CORTILE—IL GIOJELLO (VILLA GALILEO)

PLATE 19. GATE FROM GARDEN INTO CORTILE—IL GIOJELLO (VILLA GALILEO)

PLATE 20. CORTILE AND SOUTHEAST WING—IL GIOJELLO (VILLA GALILEO)

PLATE 21. WELL HEAD IN CORTILE—IL GIOJELLO (VILLA GALILEO)

PLATE 22. CORTILE AND NORTHWEST WING—IL GIOJELLO (VILLA GALILEO)

PLATE 23. WEST TERRACE LOOKING NORTH—IL GIOJELLO (VILLA GALILEO)

PLATE 24. NORTH SIDE—IL GIOIELLO (VILLA GALILEO

L'OMBRELLINO, PIAN DE' GIULLARI

L' OMBRELLINO (The Little Umbrella), so called in allusion to the little umbrella that tops the weathervane surmounting the tower, did not begin its existence as a villa residence nor has the place ever quite achieved independence as a villa in its own right, being an appanage—if one may use so dignified a term in speaking of such an unpretentious little place—of the adjacent Villa Pazzi. Nevertheless, as a comparatively small house detached from any surrounding estate, L'Ombrellino possesses not a little individuality and an interest of its own from an architectural point of view.

About the year 1300 a part of L'Ombrellino was built by the family of the Bonaccorsi as a work of piety. It was intended as an hospice for the shelter and succour of sick travellers and for pilgrims on their way to Monte Ripaldi, and was known as the Spedale della Santissima Trinità al Pian de' Giullari. It was a modest little structure containing a chapel or oratory and an equipment of two beds, with such necessary additional buildings as that limited hospital capacity implied.

It once had a little loggia opening upon the tiny piazza of Pian de' Giullari, but this was subsequently closed up. From time to time additions were made until the fabric assumed its present form, a completion effected, however, at an early date. L'Ombrellino's function as an hospice came to an end in the latter part of the sixteenth century, at which time the house and oratory were annexed to the adjoining Villa Pazzi.

The stuccoed walls are a pinkish grey in colour and the shutters are dark green. The entrance is not on the side facing the little piazza or square of Pian de' Giullari, in which appear the old chapel door and another doorway (Plate 26), but is reached by the road at the left (Plate 27) and adjoins the lodge of the gatekeeper to the Villa Pazzi.

Unpretentious and devoid of all ornament as the exterior of L'Ombrellino is, the interior is even more rigidly simple. There are no vaultings, no carved corbels, no decorative door or window trims, no beamed and painted ceilings. There is no architectural effort whatever about L'Ombrellino, either within or without; it is merely a spontaneous utilitarian structure and for that reason, without the glamour of environment, exhibits the intrinsic merit of certain features of structure and composition more or less applicable to the architectural requirements of the present day in those cases where the utmost simplicity and small sites are necessary conditions that have to be met.

From L'Ombrellino and the gatekeeper's lodge the approach to the Villa Pazzi is by a steep, straight roadway which ascends to the top of the hill between olive orchards and vineyards.

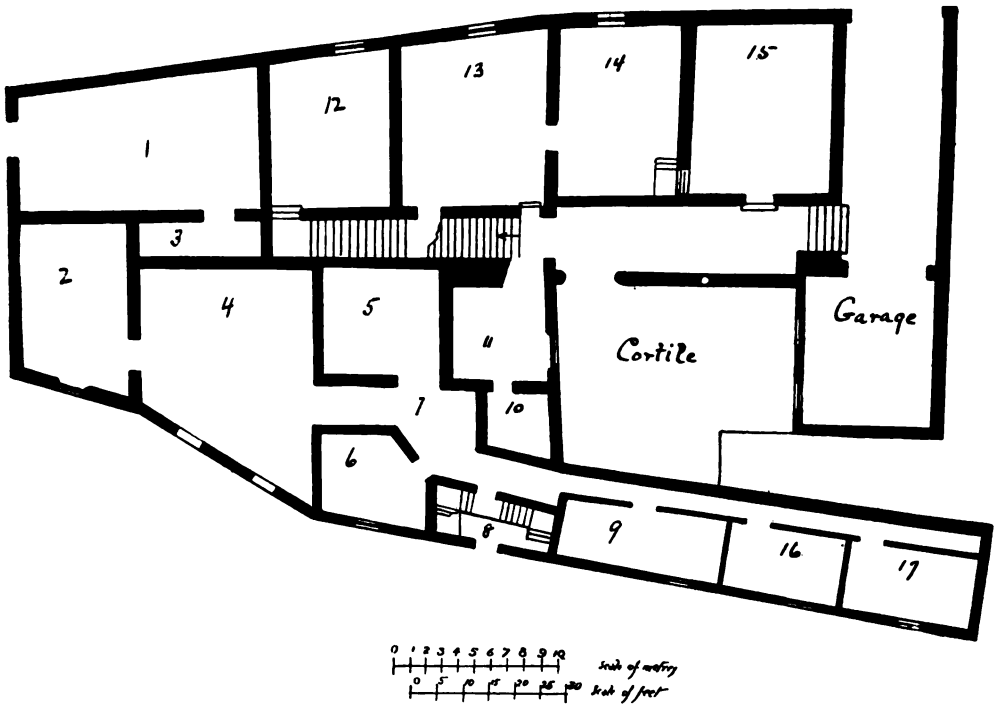


PLATE 25. GROUND FLOOR PLAN—L'OMBRELLINO, PIAN DE'GIULLARI, NEAR FLORENCE

KEY TO PLAN

1. Chapel
2. Old Infirmary
3. Sacristy
4. Part Of Old Infirmary

The Salone is above 14 and 15. The other numbers indicate ground floor rooms that have been added from time to time and have lost their original uses.

PLATE 26. NORTHEAST FRONT—L'OMBRELLINO

PLATE 27. SOUTHWEST END AND ENTRANCE—L'OMBRELLINO.

PLATE 28. THE CORTILE—L'OMBRELLINO

PLATE 29. GARDEN DOOR—L'OMBRELLINO

PLATE 30. WITHIN THE CORTILE—L'OMBRELLINO

THE VILLA PAZZI (LA VACCHIA), PIAN DE' GIULLARI

THE Villa Pazzi, on top of the hill just above Pian de' Giullari, dates back to the latter part of the twelfth century, although, of course, not in the form in which it now appears. It has been altered and added to at various periods in the course of its long history. So far as we can judge from the testimony of the records and the witness of the fabric itself, the house assumed substantially its present aspect some time during the fifteenth century.

In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the estate belonged to the Bonaccorsi. In the fifteenth century it had come into the possession of a certain Bartolommeo di Giorgio. From his heirs it went later to Francesco di Antonio, whose widow, Lucrezia, daughter of Tommaso Petrucci, came into actual possession of the villa in 1528, when she had already married a second husband, Michele Del Cittadino. From the Cittadini the estate went to the family of Della Vacchia who attached their name to the place and seem to have made various enlargements. In 1673 the Samminiati bought the villa, and in 1760 it passed by marriage into the Pazzi family. After sundry vicissitudes of ownership, it has now for a number of years been in the possession of the present occupant, Charles Eyre, Esquire.

In studying the old Tuscan villas that exhibit a tower (Plates 35, 36 and 45) rising at some point or other above the rest of their structure, it is generally safe to assume that the tower represents the most ancient part of the habitation, the nucleus about which later additions were made, a fact to which attention has already been called in Chapter I. The ground floor of the tower was not used for human occupancy but was employed for storage purposes or for stabling, the owner, or the tenant, and his household living in the upper rooms, of which there was usually one to each floor. How these early castellated abodes—capable of defence when necessary—gradually expanded and became the villa dwellings of the Renaissance has been previously explained. The ancient tower of the Villa Pazzi, from which the rest of the house subseqently grew, is a conspicuous feature of the building and impresses itself upon the imagination from whatever point of view one contemplates the house. Although the entire structure now appears as a solid rectangular mass (Plate 45), it is not at all improbable, as explained in the first chapter, that at an early date there may have been a *cortile* that occupied the space now covered on the plan (Plate 31) by the *salone*.

The extreme western portion of the building, which contains the kitchens (Plate 48), the servants' quarters, the coach house and the stables, also contains the rooms where the olives and the grapes, each in due season, are converted into oil and wine. The olives are still crushed in the time-

honoured way by a great stone disc affixed to the end of an axle beam and revolving in a circular trench, the motive power being a donkey—the whole contrivance being much like the old-fashioned horse-propelled cyder press.

The *limonaia* or lemon house, where the lemon trees are sheltered during the winter, lies to the west of the garden and its rear forms the garden wall on that side. The chapel, which is detached from the house, stands at the right side of the gate (Plates 32–34) as one enters the forecourt, while at one side of the chapel is the end of the long cypress walk (Plate 33) leading to the farmhouse, a very ancient dwelling which is usually entered through the stable and thence into the spacious kitchen. The animals and the human tenants of the farmhouse live on terms of most amiable and patriarchal *cameraderie.*

The walls of the master's house are of that elusive, chameleon-like character of colour, elsewhere alluded to, and range from a lightish chocolate brown to salmon pink, according to the light and the state of the atmosphere. The shutters are light green—there the colour is constant and it is possible to make a definite statement about it. The stonework about the doors and windows (Plates 36 and 43) is of the usual close-grained brownish grey *pietra serena.* The exterior aspect of the house is unique owing to the numerous and multi-coloured maiolica plates, platters and plaques set into the walls (Plates 36, 37 and 43), affording spots of bright yellow, orange and green, and deep blue. About an hundred years ago, when he had occasion to re-stucco the outside walls, the then occupant conceived this novel method of augmenting colour interest and forthwith put his unusual fancies into execution.

The ceiling of the large living-room or *salone* is beamed (Plate 39), but what at first sight appear to be coffers are in reality pats of red velvet edged with gold braid and tacked onto the boarding. The walls are hung with red brocatelle. In the music room the brick floor is painted with a parquetry pattern in yellow and brown. The landscape paper in several tones of grey (Plates 40 and 41) was put on the walls in the early part of the nineteenth century; at the same time the beamed ceiling was painted in several tones of grey; the lozenge-shaped coffers being simulated by ingenious shading and perspective on a flat surface. The mouldings were painted in the same adroit manner on the flat surfaces (Plates 41 and 42) of dados and window reveals, a characteristic method at that time of producing the effect of relief. The hangings are of old golden yellow brocade.

The little walled garden (Plates 46 and 47)—to the east of the house and the large garden—is a modern addition, but so carefully patterned after old precedents that it fits perfectly into the general scheme. The general arrangement of the beds and walks in the large garden (Plates 31 and 45) plainly reflects the eighteenth and early nineteenth century vogue of the

giardino inglese, but the presence of the fountain and fishpool in the centre, and the raised beds along the east and west walls, are reminiscent of an earlier tradition. An extensive use of orange and lemon trees in pots is, of course, true to ancient usage and imparts the emphasis appropriate to the old Tuscan formal garden. Though the olive orchards and vineyards come right up to the garden walls on all sides, yet the general composition is so delightful and the character of the garden so satisfying that one is not conscious of any sense of limitation. Moreover, from the south, where the garden wall is low and where the land outside falls abruptly away, there is a magnificent prospect with the Apennines and Vallombrosa in the farther distance, so that there is always a general impression of great space.

The Villa Pazzi is peculiarly rich in that most precious quality, domesticity, which constitutes no little part of its charm. There is no ostentatious grandeur; it is pre-eminently an home. The house itself is devoid of any architectural pretense. Indeed, its utter simplicity is its most alluring trait. To put it in the words of a visiting architect whom the writer once took there, "There is so damned little architecture about it that it's bound to be good."

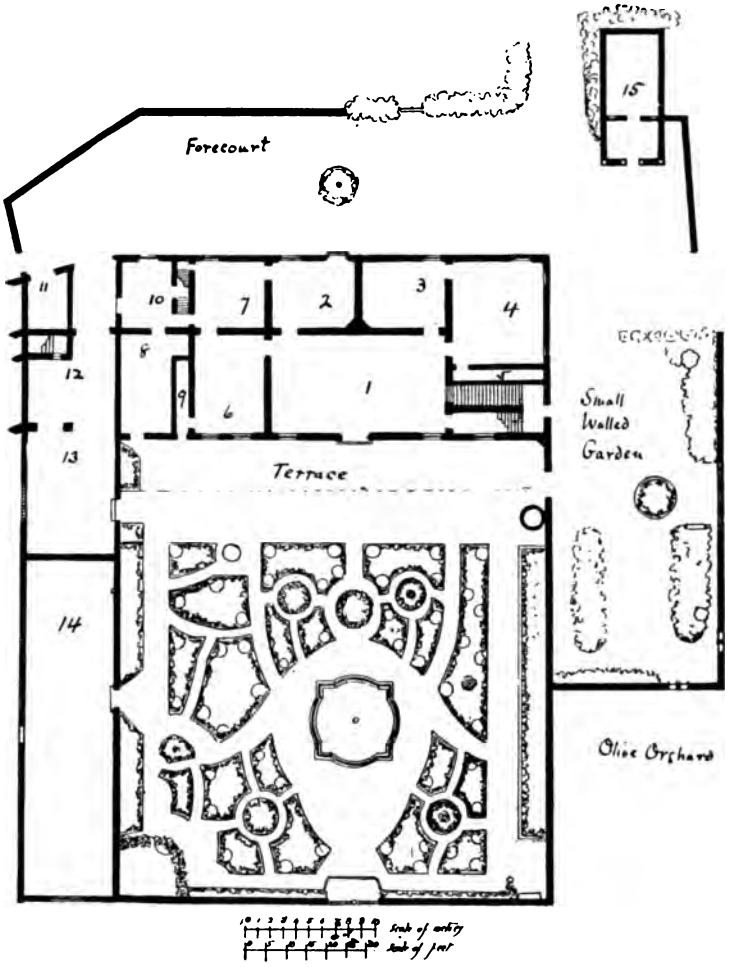


PLATE 31. GROUND FLOOR AND GARDEN PLAN—VILLA PAZZI (LA VACCHIA), PIAN DE'GIULLARI, NEAR FLORENCE

KEY TO PLAN

1. Salone or Great Hall
2. Hall
3. Study
4. Music Room
5. Cupboard for Coats, and Toilet
6. Drawing Room
7. Dining Room
8. Pantry
9. Bathroom and Toilet
10. Kitchen
11. Garage
12. Shed
13. Kitchen Courtyard
14. Lemon House
15. Chapel

The buildings opening out beyond the garage are farm appurtenances and small rooms where the oil and wine are made. They do not form any essential part of the main villa, which is fully indicated on the accompanying plan.

PLATE 32. GATEWAY AND CHAPEL—VILLA PAZZI (LA VACCHIA)

PLATE 33. CHAPEL AND CYPRESS WALK TO PODERE—VILLA PAZZI (LA VACCHIA)

PLATE 34. NORTH FRONT, FROM GATE—VILLA PAZZI (LA VACCHI)

PLATE 35. NORTH FRONT—VILLA PAZZI (LA VACCHIA)

PLATE 36. NORTH FRONT—VILLA PAZZI (LA VACCHI)

PLATE 37. HOUSE DOOR—VILLA PAZZI (LA VACCHIA)

PLATE 38. DOORWAY IN SALONE—VILLA PAZZI (LA VACCHIA)

PLATE 37. HOUSE DOOR—VILLA PAZZI (LA VACCHIA)

PLATE 40. MUSIC ROOM—VILLA PAZZI (LA VACCHIA)

PLATE 41. MUSIC ROOM—VILLA PAZZI (LA VACCHIA)

PLATE 42. WINDOWS IN MUSIC ROOM—VILLA PAZZI (LA VACCHIA)

PLATE 43. DETAIL SOUTH FRONT—VILLA PAZZI (LA VACCHIA)

PLATE 44. SOUTH FRONT AND TERRACE—VILLA PAZZI (LA VACCHIA)

PLATE 45. SOUTH FRONT FROM GARDEN—VILLA PAZZI (LA VACCHIA)

PLATE 46. GARDEN GATE— VILLA PAZZI (LA VACCHIA)

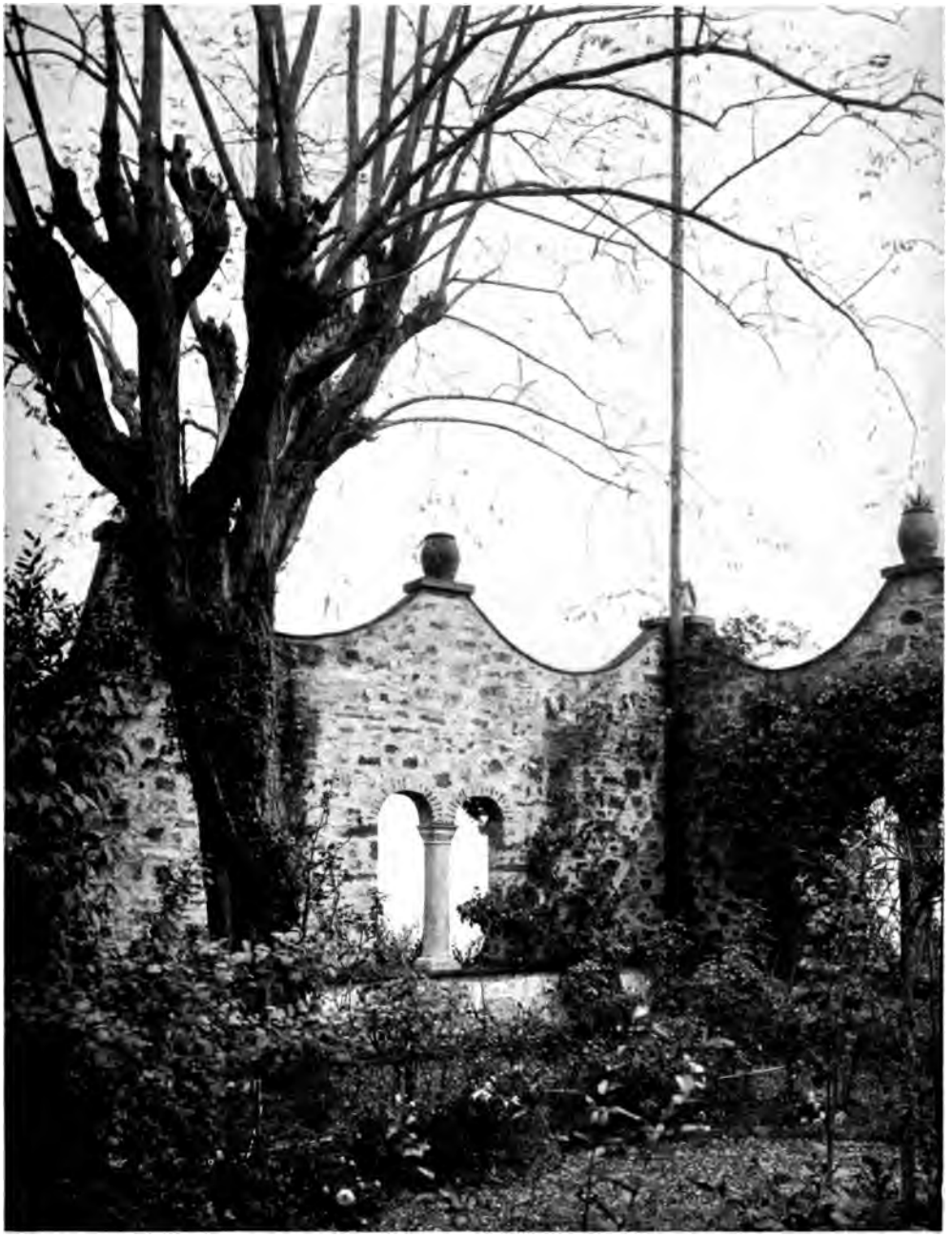


PLATE 47. LITTLE WALLED GARDEN—VILLA PAZZI (LA VACCHIA)

PLATE 48. KITCHEN CORTILE—VILLA PAZZI (LA VACCHIA)

IL FRULLINO, SAN GERVASIO, FLORENCE

THE Villa Frullino, on the Via Camerata in San Gervasio, nearly half way between the centre of Florence and Fiesole, is characteristic of one of the types of the smaller Tuscan villas—so many of which were built in the neighbourhood of Florence during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. As the plans shew (Plate 49), the house is a rectangle in mass, built about a central *cortile*.

The present form of the house, dating chiefly from the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century, is really an addition to a much older nucleus. Recent alterations and restorations, undertaken since the illustrations were made, have brought to light much of the thirteenth century workmanship in and about the tower (Plate 53), the removal of the stucco coat plainly revealing the original arrangements. From the evidence thus disclosed it is clear that the tower and a small adjacent portion of the structure constituted the original dwelling while the other parts of the house completing the enclosure of the *cortile* came as a later development.

The glazed triple arcade on the first floor of the south front (Plate 51), above the house door, indicates a comparatively recent alteration. This has now been replaced by an open loggia designed in conformity with ancient precedent. The change has vastly improved the appearance of the façade. In the *cortile* the glazing of the loggia, as shewn in one of the illustrations (Plate 56), was likewise a recent defacement. This, too, has now been eliminated. The *sgrafitto* decoration on the west wall of the *cortile*, above the arcade of the loggia, is in dull buff and brown. While it is more or less in keeping with the character of the house, it is not an original embellishment and, judging from internal evidence, was wrought not by a Tuscan but by some foreign hand for there are elements of jocosity in the composition, and the Tuscans are a serious-minded people not much given to any sort of joking or humorous grotesquerie in the expression of their art.

The hood of the fireplace (Plate 54) in the drawing-room is a restoration,while a shell-headed niche near the fireplace, and obviously intended for a lavabo, is of sixteenth century design and was evidently inserted at some period when this room was used for dining purposes. This has since been removed and another more ancient lavabo that has come to light has been placed in the dining-room. Traces of several other old lavabos are discernible abovestairs and it is not at all impossible that the kitchen may once have been on the first floor. As a matter of fact the house is like a palimpsest and at every step in the restoration some new bit of testimony turns up relative to the manners of a former time, occasionally of a nature puzzling to the restorers.

In the drawing-room, the loggia, and several other parts of the house, the spiral-fluted and foliated corbels of *pietra serena* (Plates 54 and 55)

that support the pendentives of the lunette vaulting are of a pattern much employed by Brunelleschi and afford some fascinating studies in well-considered detail. In several of the rooms not shewn in the illustrations the ceilings, instead of being vaulted, are of greater height and beamed, here and there disclosing touches of the old coloured decoration. The floors are paved with large oblong bricks and painted, generally a deep brownish red.

The stuccoed exterior walls of the house are covered with a dull brownish wash, while the shutters are painted a light green. The stonework surrounding the doors and windows (Plate 58) is the usual *pietra serena*. The top stage of the tower is a *belvedere* open on all four sides. This is quite in accord with an ancient usage, common though not universal. When one considers the glorious views to be obtained thence—to the northwest, the rugged mass of Monte Morello; to the north, the steep slopes ascending to high Fiesole; to the east, the long flanks of the Apennines; to the south and west, Florence and the smiling Val d'Arno—to say nothing of the refreshing breezes during the hot summer months, it is not hard to understand why the tower *belvedere* so strongly commended itself to the Renaissance builders as a place of inspiring outlook and, indeed, as an outdoor living-room. Would that more moderns might take a lesson from their wisdom and build these intensely practical, comfortable, and private *belvederi* instead of messing up the composition of their houses by obstinately insisting upon ugly, irrelevant, and palpably *appended* verandahs that constitute no integral portion of the structure.

The garden arrangements are exceedingly simple, but effective, the charm lying chiefly in the massing of foliage and in the incisive contour and placing of the cypress trees. Of course, the garden, in accordance with Italian custom, is enclosed by a high wall. The present owner, Doctor Roatta, has made a small formal parterre in strict conformity with *quattrocento* traditions.

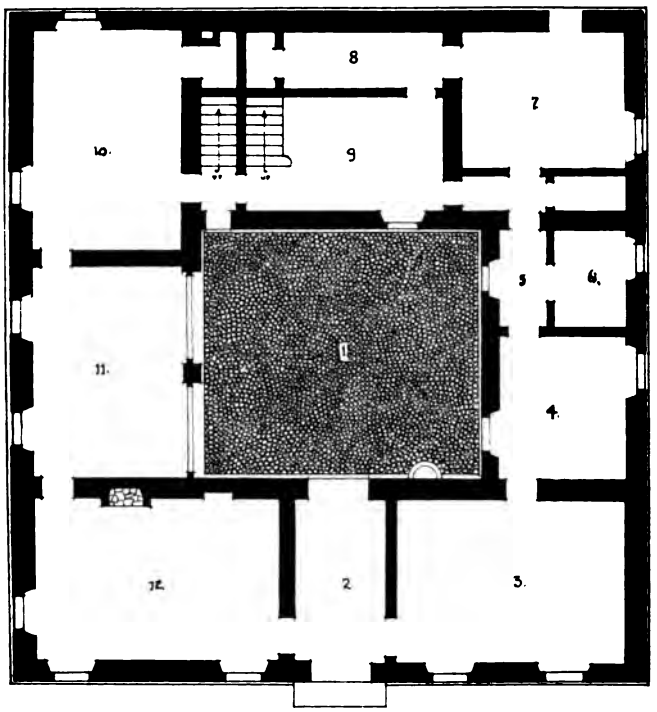
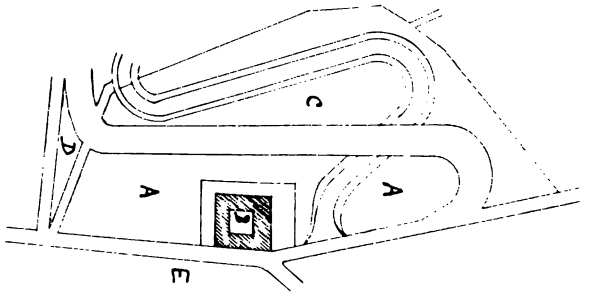


PLATE 49. GROUND FLOOR PLAN—IL FRULLINO, SAN GERVASIO, NEAR FLORENCE



PLOT, IL FRULLINO

KEY TO PLAN

1. Cortile Paved with Gravel, Open to Sky
2. Entrance Hall
3. Dining Room
4. Breakfast Room
5. Passage Way
6. Pantry or Serving Room
7. Kitchen
8. Closet or Store Room
9. Stair Hall
10. Library or Study
11. Loggia with Arcade Opening into Cortile
12. Drawing Room

PLATE 50. ENTRANCE—IL FRULLINO

PLATE 51. SOUTH FRONT—IL RULLINO

PLATE 52. SOUTH FRONT FROM GARDEN—IL FRULLINO

PLATE 53. NORTH FRONT—IL FRULLINO

PLATE 54. SALONE—IL FRULLINO

PLATE 55. DOOR WITHIN LOGGIA—IL FRULLINO

PLATE 56. LOGGIA ARCADE IN CORTILE—IL FRULLINO

PLATE 57. WELL HEAD IN CORTILE—IL FRULLINO

PLATE 58. EAST SIDE OF CORTILE—IL FRULLINO

THE VILLA CAPPONI AT ARCETRI

THE Villa Capponi, at Arcetri, near Florence, belonged at the beginning of the fifteenth century to Piero di Bartolommeo di Bonaccorsi. Between the time of Piero di Bartolommeo and the latter part of the sixteenth century the estate passed through various hands until, in 1572, Gino di Lodovico Capponi bought it and in the ownership of his heirs and descendants it continued until a comparatively recent date. It was during the long ownership of the powerful and wealthy Capponi family that the villa, by sundry enlargements and embellishments, assumed virtually its present condition.

The presence of the tower is sufficient evidence that the structure originated as a fortified farmhouse, in the manner explained in Chapter I. of the Introduction. The gradual enlargement included a *cortile* round about three sides of which the various rooms were grouped. With later additions the house assumed a more rambling plan (Plate 59), until the present system has become thoroughly irregular. In the base of the tower, which is the oldest portion of the house, and in the parts immediately adjacent, are numerous evidences of archaic workmanship.

The central hall, numbered 1 on the Plan, divides the house into two parts. To the east are the chapel and sacristy, the servants' quarters, the kitchens, the stables, and the coach house; to the west are the living rooms of the family, with the family kitchen adjoining the *cortile*. The *cortile* is closed in from the garden by a curtain wall, and against this, in the garden, a loggia has been built in modern times (Plate 72).

The south front lies directly along a narrow road that plunges abruptly down into the valley (Plate 60). The three doors close together on this road front (Plate 61) are the house door or *portone*, the chapel door, and the stable door. The west, north and east sides of the house (Plates 70–72) face into the gardens. As is the case with nearly all of these Tuscan villas, the colouring is an essential part of the charm. Here the walls are of a warm salmon tone, the shutters are light green, and the Capponi arms, enclosed within cartouches high on the walls of the tower (Plates 70 and 71) are in black and white. The door and window trims are wrought in grey *pietra serena*.

The floors are of brick painted and varnished, save in the halls, which are paved with tiles of chequered black and white marble (Plates 62–64). The ceilings of the rooms are beamed and painted (Plates 65 and 68), and the halls are vaulted (Plates 62–64). In the dining-room, the cornice above the door (Plate 69), which appears in the illustration to be moulded, is merely a bit of clever painting in perspective on a flat surface in the characteristic Italian manner. The vaulting of the hall from the house

door to the cross arm (Plate 62) has painted coffering wrought on a flat surface in the same ingenious fashion.

There are three gardens, the upper, middle and lower, designated on the plan respectively as A, C and E. (Plates 73, 75, and 77). The upper garden is on the same level with the ground floor of the house. Immediately before the house is the lawn B, while at the eastern end of it is a box pleasaunce or parterre, C (Plate 73), the entrance to which is marked by rusticated stuccoed gate piers with wyverns atop (Plate 74). These posts and also the walls of all three gardens are of the same salmon colour as the walls of the house.

A flight of steps descends from the western end of the upper garden to the middle garden (Plate 75), and another flight, after passing through a gateway, brings one from the middle to the lower garden (Plate 77). The window with a bulging grille (Plate 76), in the south wall of the middle garden, looks down upon the road many feet below. From the lower garden a short flight of steps, outside the postern gate (Plate 78), goes down into the olive orchard.

These gardens are all formally planned according to ancient precedent, but it should be noted that they are of modern execution. They are not at all lacking in a full and varied equipment of flowers, but their chief horticultural emphasis is derived from the effective arrangement and massing of foliage.

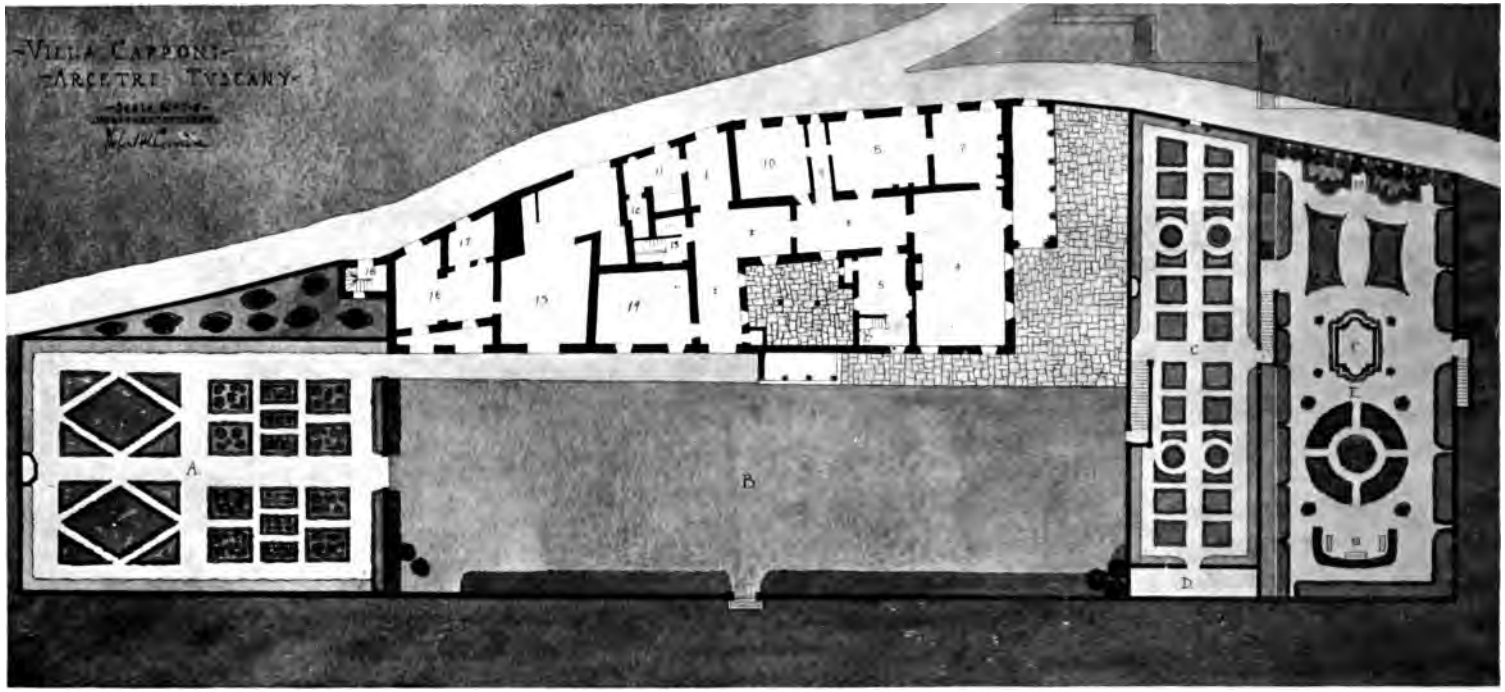


PLATE 59. GROUND FLOOR AND GARDEN PLANS—VILLA CAPPONI, ARCETRI, NEAR FLORENCE

KEY TO PLAN

1. Vestibule
2. Hall
3. Inner Hall
4. Drawing Room
5. Kitchen
6. Servants' Staircase
7. Morning Room
8. Dining Room
9. Staircase
10. Library
11. Chapel
12. Sacristy
13. Servants' Staircase
14. Servants' Hall
15. Coach House
16. Stable
17. Box Stalls
18. Outside Staircase

A. Box Pleasaunce
B. Lawn
C. Middle Garden
D. Lemon House
E. Lower Garden
F. Fountain and Pool

PLATE 60. LANE LEADING DOWN TO VILLA—VILLA CAPPONI

PLATE 61. LANE LEADING UP TO VILLA—VILLA CAPPONI

PLATE 62. ENTRANCE HALL.—VILLA CAPPONI

PLATE 61. HALLWAY, LOOKING TOWARDS ENTRANCE—VILLA CAPPONI

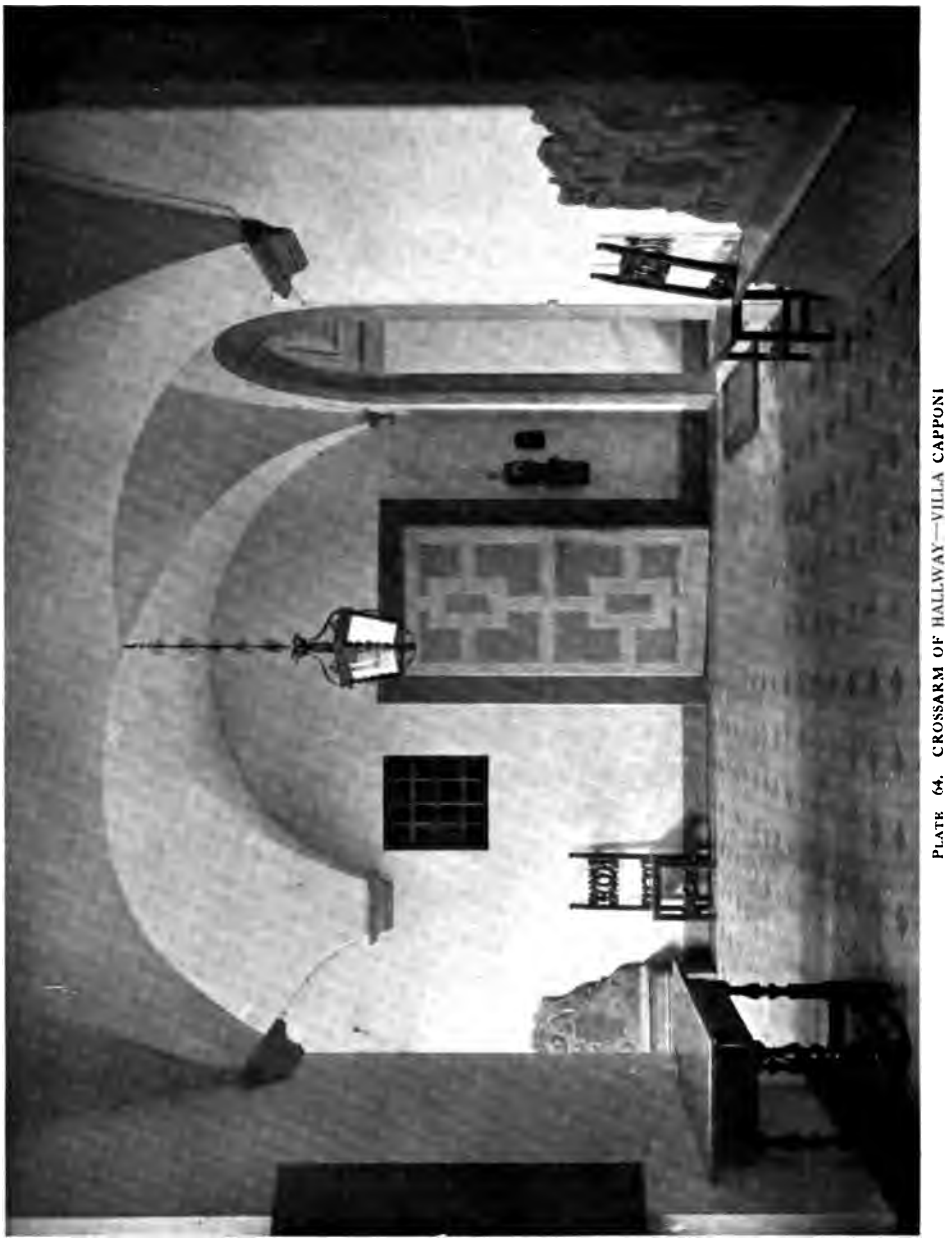


PLATE 64. CROSSARM OF HALLWAY—VILLA CAPPONI

PLATE 65. SALONE—VILLA CAPPONI

PLATE 66. FIREPLACE IN SALONE—VILLA CAPPONI

PLATE 67. END OF SALONE—VILLA CAPPONI

PLATE 68. MORNING ROOM—VILLA CAPPONI

PLATE 69. DINING ROOM—VILLA CAPPONI

PLATE 70. GARDEN FRONT—VILLA CAPPONI

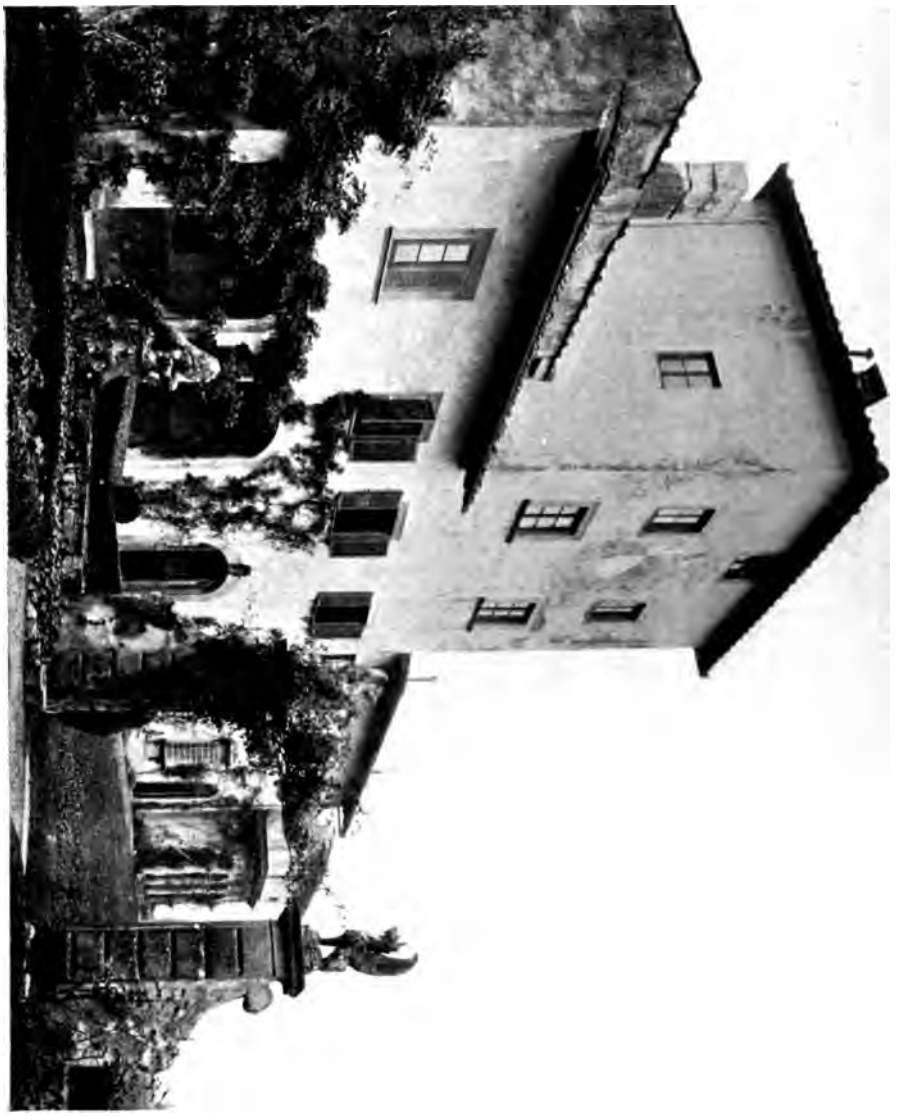


PLATE 71. GARDEN FRONT FROM BOX PLEASAUNCE—VILLA CAPPONI

PLATE 72. LOGGIA IN GARDEN—VILLA CAPPONI

PLATE 73. BOX PLEASAUNCE—VILLA CAPPONI

PLATE 74. GATEWAY TO BOX PLEASAUNCE—VILLA CAPPONI

PLATE 75. MIDDLE GARDEN—VILLA CAPPONI

PLATE 76. END WALL, MIDDLE GARDEN—VILLA CAPPONI

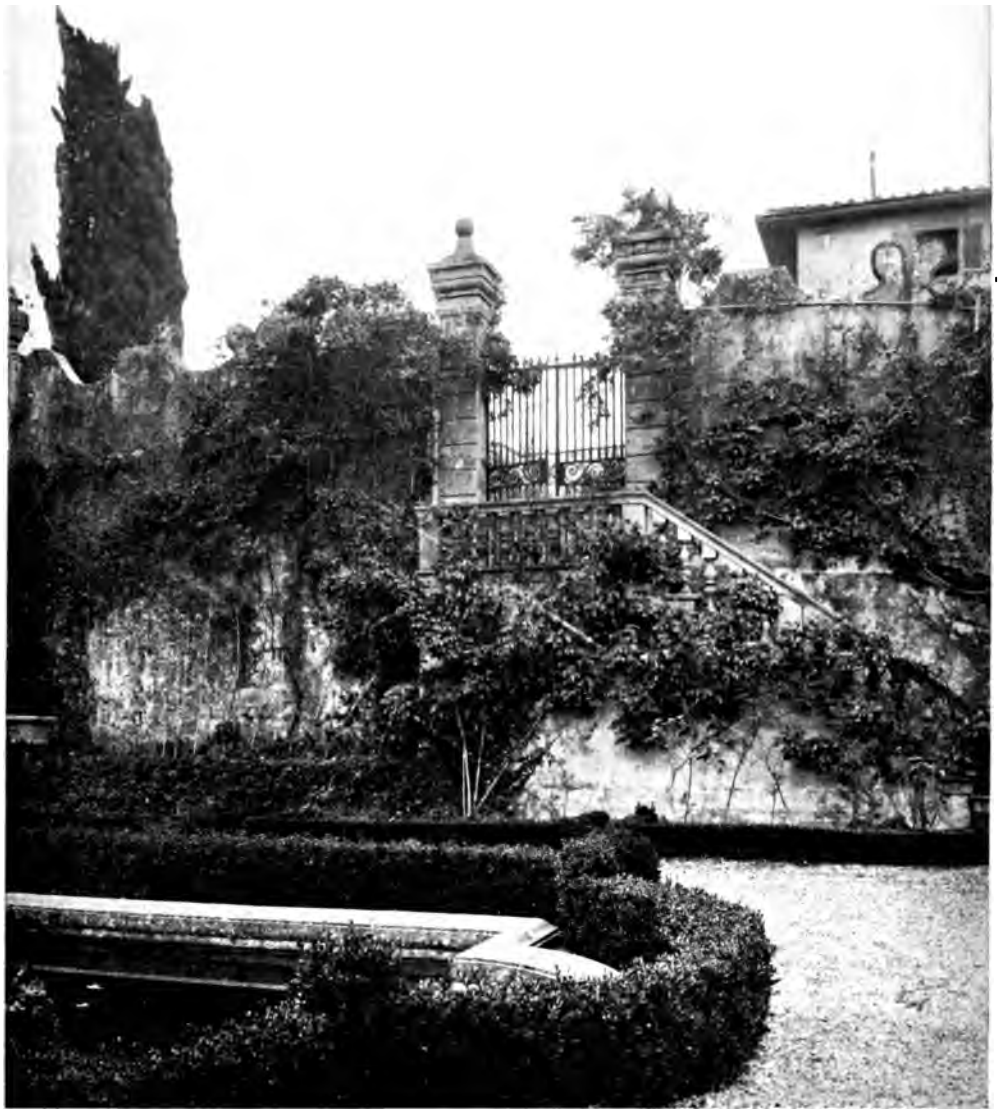


PLATE 77. LOWER GARDEN AND POOL—VILLA CAPPONI

PLATE 78. POSTERN GATE IN LOWER GARDEN—VILLA CAPPONI

THE VILLETTA, AT THE VILLA PALMIERI, SAN DOMENICO, BETWEEN FLORENCE AND FIESOLE

THE Villetta, a small estate now incorporated within the demesne of the Villa Palmieri at San Domenico, not far outside the Barriera delle Cure, affords the visitor one of the most interesting and archæologically valuable treats to be found in the vicinity of Florence. The house is of great antiquity, dating in part from the thirteenth century, and such restorations as it has undergone have been so ably and intelligently carried out that one finds a very perfect and representative bit of early Renaissance domestic architecture unspoiled by modern accretions.

To the west of the building, and overlooking the valley, is the flag-paved threshing floor (Plate 85), an important adjunct of the old Tuscan villa and farmstead. The little box pleasaunce before the south front of the house (Plates 83, 84 and 95) is a restoration, it is true, but the ancient traditions of arrangement have been observed with such meticulous care that, upon entering it, one really steps back four centuries and leaves the modern world behind. The old well-head (Plate 84) at one end, the gravelled walks and the box-edged divisions all faithfully conform to Renaissance gardening usage. Along the south façade of the house are portions of the old *sgrafitto* decoration, pilasters, friezes, and other features of Classic provenance (Plates 81, 83 and 84) wrought with a characteristic touch that vividly recalls the great age of Brunelleschi.

The little walled garden to the east of the house is, like the box parterre at the south, a restoration. Indeed, it might be more accurate to say that it is almost wholly a new creation. Nevertheless, it is so true in every respect to the spirit of the old enclosed Tuscan garden that it deserves more than a mere passing mention. The wall, in its utilitarian capacity, separates the little garden plot, adjacent to the house, from the higher ground of the orchards and farm land beyond, the masonry being carried enough above the level of the higher ground to shut out the view of agricultural operations and bring the summit to the foliage line of a row of ilex trees which thus supply a soft, rich background to the agricultural lines. In its architectural capacity the wall not only makes it possible to have a garden where otherwise nothing of the sort could exist, but it is also the chief factor in creating a little area of elegant and urbane seclusion appropriate to the villa it adorns. The elements entering into the composition are few and simple—the matted greenery of ivy at the base, the sharp contrast of a line of masonry whose undulating top ramps up to form pedestals for a row of marble busts, and the dense leafage of ilex boughs behind and above—and yet the trenchant interest produced is more complete than it

oftentimes is in places where far more elaborate means have been employed. The space within the walled enclosure is geometrically laid out with gravelled paths and box-edged flower beds, a fountain and pool forming the central feature—all in accordance with Renaissance gardening tradition.

The general plan of the house, owing to sundry additions and adaptations that took place at an early date, can scarcely be considered so thoroughly typical as the plan of some of the other contemporary villas included in this volume, but the Villetta is so admirably satisfying and full of inspiration in many other ways that it commands our closest attention. The loggia (Plates 87 and 90), which is exceptionally beautiful, was at one time partially walled up. The removal of this wall has opened to view a charming little *cortile* from which an outside stone staircase (Plate 90) ascends to the first floor of an adjacent part of the house. These outside staircases, as it has already been pointed out, are thoroughly characteristic of the early manner of building. The other staircase, serving the main portion of the house, is virtually an outside staircase also, for it is entered from the ground floor loggia and, making one turn, ascends directly into the first floor loggia (Plate 92), without having any connexion whatever with the rooms. This second or principal staircase, as was the wont of the period when it was built, is exceedingly simple and not at all an object of architectural emphasis.

It is a matter of no little interest at the Villetta to find the kitchen (Plate 91) not on the ground floor but abovestairs. This arrangement of having the kitchen on the first floor seems to have obtained at an early date in not a few instances, but wherever such a scheme once prevailed, the culinary department as a rule has since been transferred to the ground floor. The kitchen fireplace, a particularly good piece of work in both design and execution, merits notice also on account of the arched niches on the inner sides of the cheeks.

The beamed ceilings of the ground floor rooms claim both study and admiration. Fortunately for their present state of preservation, they were hidden from view for one knows not how many years by false ceilings that had been put in presumably to reduce the height of the rooms and, perhaps, make them easier to heat in winter. When these false plaster ceilings were torn out, the ancient beamed ceilings were disclosed with their colours far fresher and their patterns more distinct than could possibly have been the case if the false ceilings had never been put in. No two of the old ceilings are alike in their decoration. In one room, where the roughhewn timbers are headed in the walls without the amenity of supporting corbels, both beams and joists bear on their edges a bold chevron pattern in a colour succession of blue, white and red. The little batten strips that cover the joints of the boards are painted blue with a geometrical figure of

red on reserved ovals of white. The scheme is thoroughly simple but highly effective. In another room the edges of the beams have a succession of ovals of alternate red and blue, each oval charged with a white lozenge. The joist edges are red with a succession of small white lozenges; the battens are blue with white ovals charged with red lozenges. In the *salone* the ceiling system is more elaborate though entirely structural. The beams rest on corbels carved with an acanthus leaf. This bit of carving is painted with an harmonious distribution of red, white, blue, black and yellow. At the sides, the innermost moulding adjacent to wall and beam is red, the next member alternate squares of white and blue; the flat cheek of the corbel is brown with a red acanthus leaf painted on it, and the edges are defined by a small saw-tooth band of alternate black and yellow. The lower edges of the beams are blue with a spiral pattern of alternate black and white stripes, the black stripes charged with white reservations bearing red dots. The joists are edged with narrow saw-tooth bands of black and yellow; the battens are white with elongated blue quatrefoils and red half-quatrefoils chequer-wise while the edges are bounded by minute saw-tooth bands of black and yellow. In all three rooms the battens divide the ceiling space into rectangles so that the effect approximates that of a coffered ceiling, although, as stated before, all the ceiling systems are entirely structural. In some cases where the boards are of irregular widths, the batten decoration is painted on a flat surface.

Another most interesting piece of painting at the Villetta is a fragment of ancient fresco (Plate 88) on a wall within the loggia. From an archæological point of view, this bit of fresco, though indistinct and nearly obliterated, is valuable in its testimony to Renaissance methods of gardening and garden design. As previously stated in Chapter V. of the Introduction, the fresco fragment discovers a section of garden wall on top of which an ornamental vase contains a box-tree that the topiarist has fashioned into a tall standard supporting three separate spherical masses of foliage, one above another, diminishing in size to the top. Inside the wall, and close against it, a thick hedge is trimmed with an undulating top in the traditional Tuscan manner. The white animal on the flowered foreground suggests the small menageries that were sometimes kept as a part of the garden equipment. An interesting allusion to this practice occurs in the introduction to the Third Day of the Decameron. After viewing the rest of the garden of the Villa Palmieri, the Queen and her party discover a remaining delight in store for them:

"But yet another beauty (which before had not presented it selfe to them) on a sodaine they perceyved; namely divers pretty creatures in many parts of the Gardens. In one place Conies tripping about; in another place Hares; in a third part Goats browsing on the hearbes, and little yong Hindes feeding every where: yet without strife or warring together, but

rather living in such a Domesticke and pleasant kinde of company, even as if they were appointed to enstruct the most noble of all creatures, to imitate their sociable conversation."

Boccaccio's Decameron; anonymously done into English, 1625.

It will be observed that the wall of the garden to the east of the house is shaped with undulations very like those in the fresco. It is not at all improbable that the fresco painter took his *motif* from some nearby garden wall actually existing when he wrought his mural decoration. Who knows? It was characteristic of the old Italian painters to take their subjects from their immediate surroundings and pourtray them faithfully. In many a villa are preserved mural decorations, generally of a later date, however, depicting various views of the estate.

The illustrations and plan convey such full information concerning the Villetta that further verbal comment could but repeat what the eye perceives in greater detail and much more quickly.

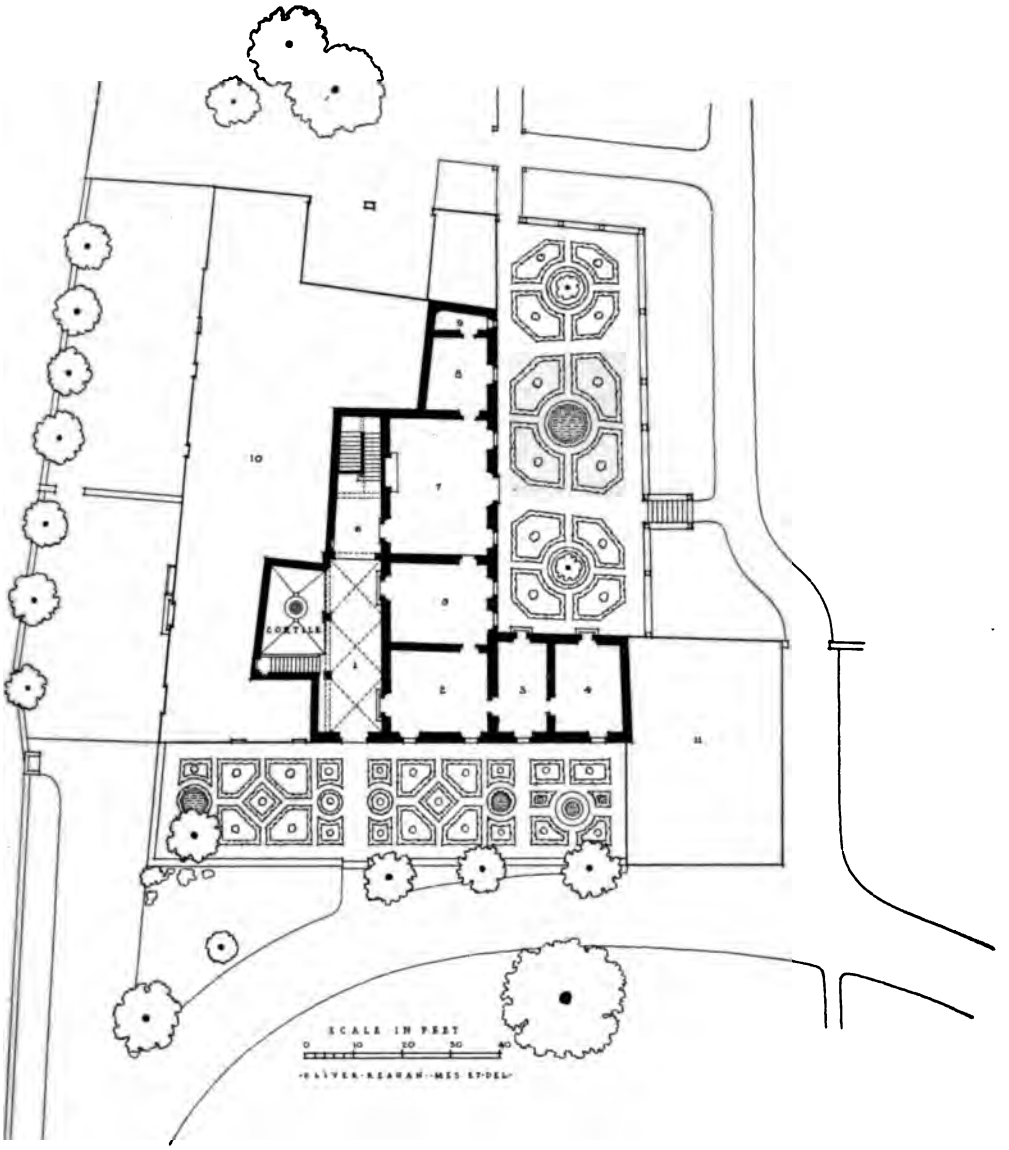


PLATE 79. GROUND FLOOR AND GARDEN PLANS—THE VILLETTA, VILLA PALMIERI, SAN DOMENICO, NEAR FLORENCE

KEY TO PLAN

1. Loggia
2. 3. 4. and 5. Chambers
6. Stair
7. Salone
8. Ante-room
9. Bathroom
10. Later Buildings
11. Stables

PLATE 80. SOUTH AND WEST FRONTS—THE VILLETTA

PLATE 81. ENTRANCE—THE VILLETTA

PLATE 82. PORTONE. DETAIL—THE VILLETTA

PLATE 81. SOUTH FRONT AND BOX PLEASAUNCE—THE VILLETTA

PLATE 84. WELL-HEAD IN BOX PLEASAUNCE—THE VILLETTA

PLATE 85. WEST FRONT AND THRESHING FLOOR—THE VILLETTA

PLATE 86. POSTERN GATE IN WALLED GARDEN—THE VILLETTA

PLATE 87. LOGGIA AND CORTILE, ENTRANCE TO STAIRCASE THROUGH ARCH AT END.—THE VILLETTA

PLATE 88. FRAGMENT OF FOURTEENTH CENTURY FRESCO IN GROUND FLOOR LOGGIA—THE VILLETTA

PLATE 89. XV CENTURY ARMORIAL FRESCO IN LOGGIA—THE VILLETTA

PLATE 90. LOGGIA, CORTILE AND OUTSIDE STAIRCASE—THE VILLETTA

PLATE 91. KITCHEN AND FIREPLACE—THE VILLETTA

PLATE 93. FIRST FLOOR LOGGIA, LOOKING INTO CORTILE—THE VILLETTA

PLATE 92. FIRST FLOOR LOGGIA—THE VILLETTA

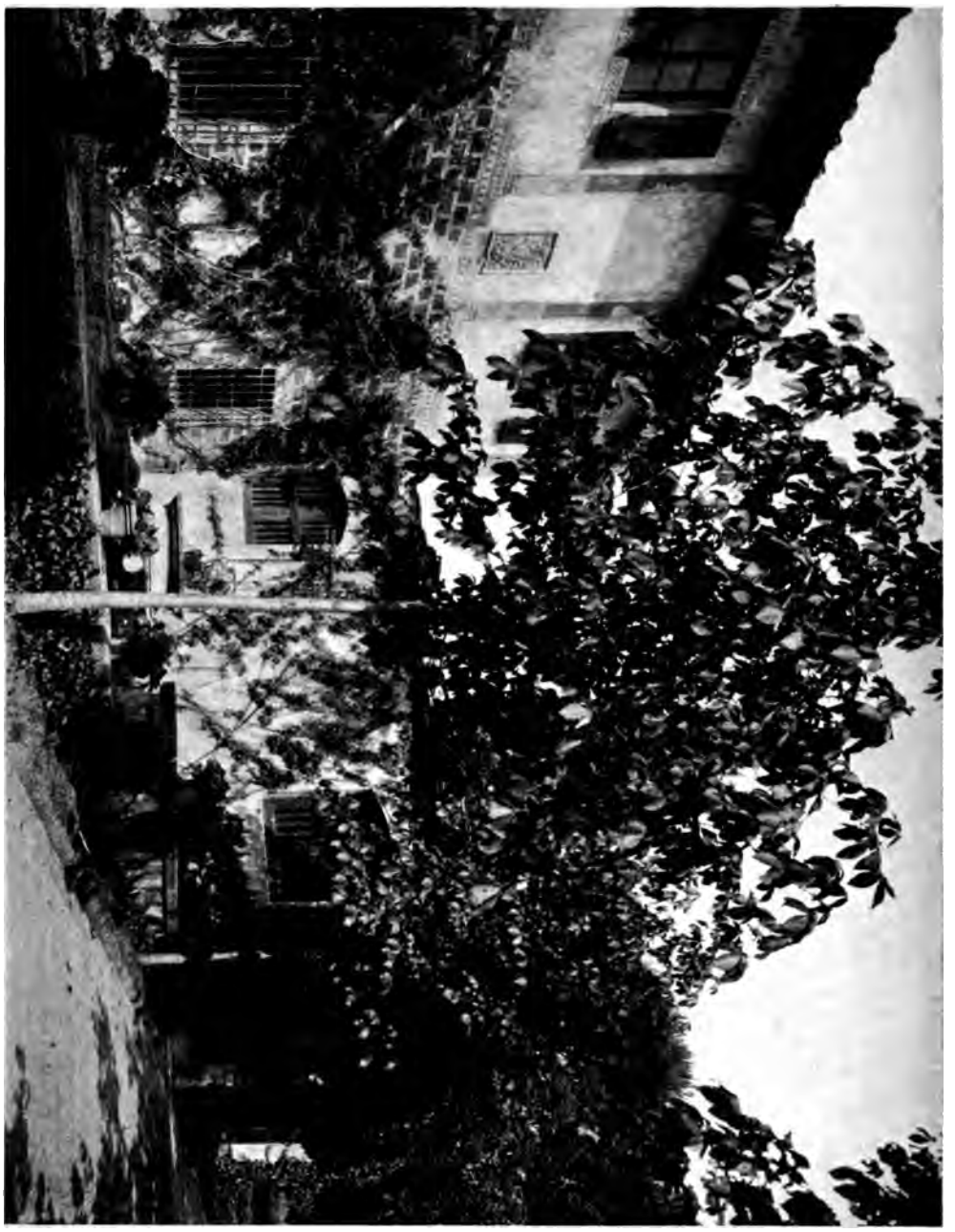


PLATE 94. PART OF SOUTH FRONT AND STABLE—THE VILLETTA

PLATE 95. HOUSE DOOR AND BOX PLEASAUNCE—THE VILLETTA

THE VILLA CELSA, NEAR SIENA

CELSA, about eight or nine miles distant from Siena, is a castellated villa of the ancient type, occupying a commanding hillside position, the land falling away abruptly into a wooded valley at the south, across and beyond which there is a distant outlook over rolling, half-mountainous country.

In its dominant characteristics (Plates 98 and 102) the building is of thirteenth or early fourteenth century pattern, but from time to time it has undergone various alterations and additions so that its austere pristine aspect has been somewhat modified. In plan, the buildings extend about three sides of the *cortile*, but the *cortile*, instead of being at least approximately rectangular, is shaped like a blunted wedge (Plate 98), the head of the wedge lying open to the south while the north block and the converging east and west blocks of the castle structure bound it on the other three sides.

The long, open south side of the *cortile* is separated from the road and the garden beyond by a seventeenth century screen (Plates 97, 98 and 99). This screen, in three bays, is of unmistakably Baroque provenance in its design. Nevertheless, the difference in inspiration creates no conflict with the older structure that the screen supplements. The wrought iron gate (Plate 101) and the grilles, in the two flanking arches, add a touch of refinement that enhances the charm and interest of the composition.

Outside the screen is a planted terrace (Plate 97) and, outside this again, a balustraded wall. Then comes the driveway, beyond which another balustraded wall, somewhat lower than the terrace wall just mentioned, bounds the parterre. This parterre, which lies at the top of the steep southern slope, and was evidently created or else much re-arranged about the same time the screen and balustraded walls were built, is divided in two parts by a wide ramped walk (Plate 98) with short flights of steps at frequent intervals.

The little garden of the Villa Celsa fortunately escaped the devastating path of that misguided passion for the *giardino inglese* which swept over Italy like a tornado, ruining the courtly creations of the old garden designers. The early formal plan with all its inherent dignity has remained unspoiled and completes the symmetry and poise of the last piece of composition by which the villa was graced. In contemplating even so small a garden, one cannot fail to be conscious of the enlightened vision that inspired the Baroque architects and garden designers and to recognise their complete mastery of the art they professed.

Baldassare Peruzzi is known to have had some connexion with the Villa Celsa and the beautiful round chapel (Plates 97 and 100), standing by itself near the southeast angle of the castle, has been attributed to his

design. This attribution is presumably well founded for the chapel is a remarkably fine piece of composition and does credit to that renowned master to whose hand it is ascribed. The castle itself antedates his time, and the screen, balustraded walls and garden, which are not at all in his manner are much too late for him to have had anything to do with them. On the north front of the castle, the entrance from the bridge across the moat has a fine Renaissance doorway (Plate 102) which might have been designed by Baldassare Peruzzi, but barring this single feature the Chapel is the only work that bears witness to Peruzzi's genius.

The massive grey rubble walls of the castle, pierced with Gothic windows (Plates 98 and 102), the east tower reminiscent of the Bargello in Florence (Plate 97), and the two stern western towers with battlemented tops (Plate 98) not only contribute materially to the impressive vigour of this ancient stronghold, but are also eloquent reminders of a period when the polite refinements of life within were enjoyed only at the price of constant vigilance and readiness to withstand violence from without.

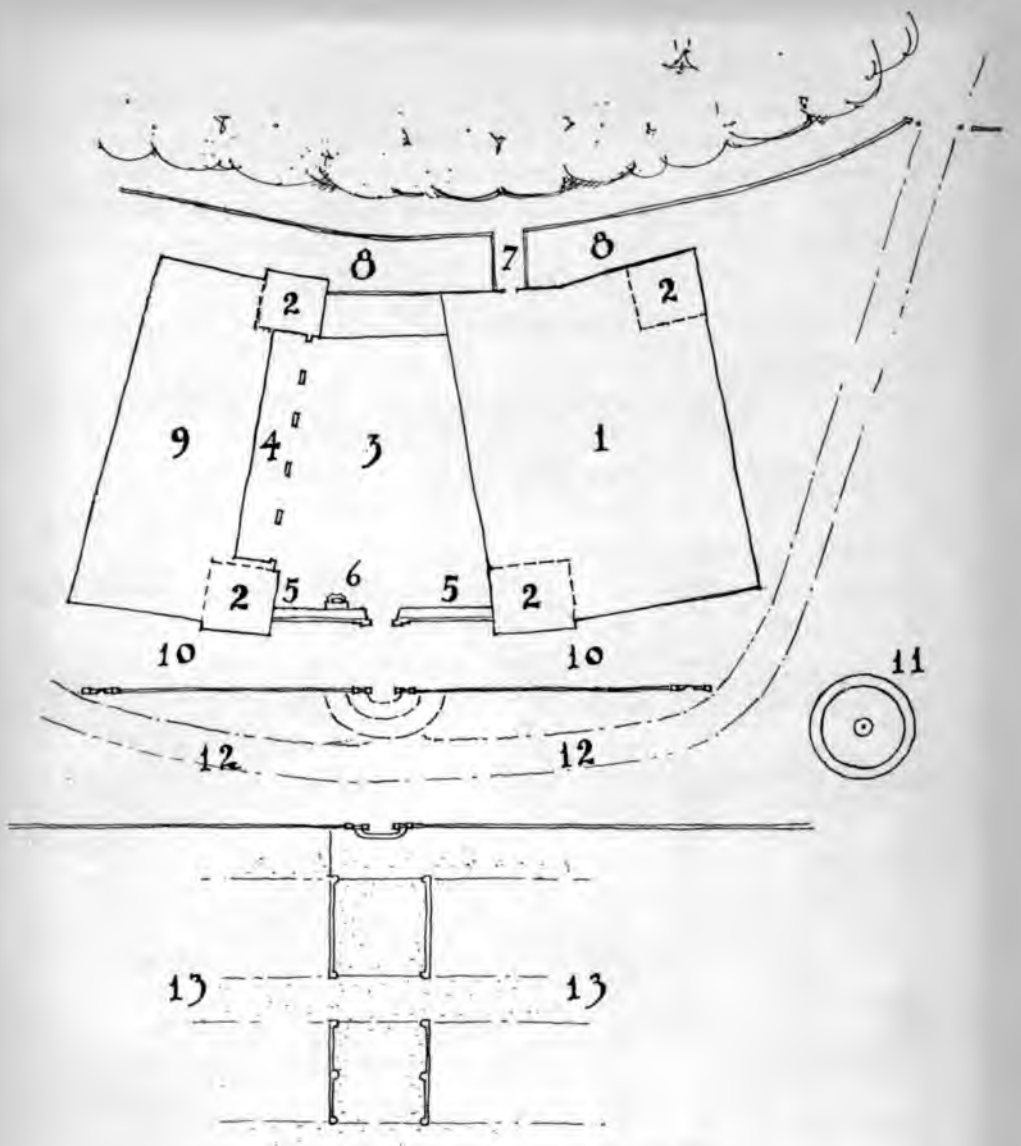


PLATE 96. PLOT PLAN—VILLA CELSA, NEAR SIENA

KEY TO PLAN

1. Castello
2. Towers
3. Cortile
4. Loggia
5. Screen
6. Well Head
7. Drawbridge
8. Dry Moat
9. Dependencies
10. Planted Terrace
11. Chapel
12. Road
13. Garden

PLATE 97. ENTRANCE, PART OF SOUTH FRONT AND CHAPEL—VILLA CELSA

PLATE 98. SOUTH FRONT, CORTILE SCREEN AND GARDEN—VILLA CELSA

PLATE 99. GATEWAY AND DETAIL OF CORTILE SCREEN—VILLA CELSA

PLATE 100. THE CHAPEL—VILLA CELSA

PLATE 101 WELL HEAD IN CORTILE—VILLA CELSA

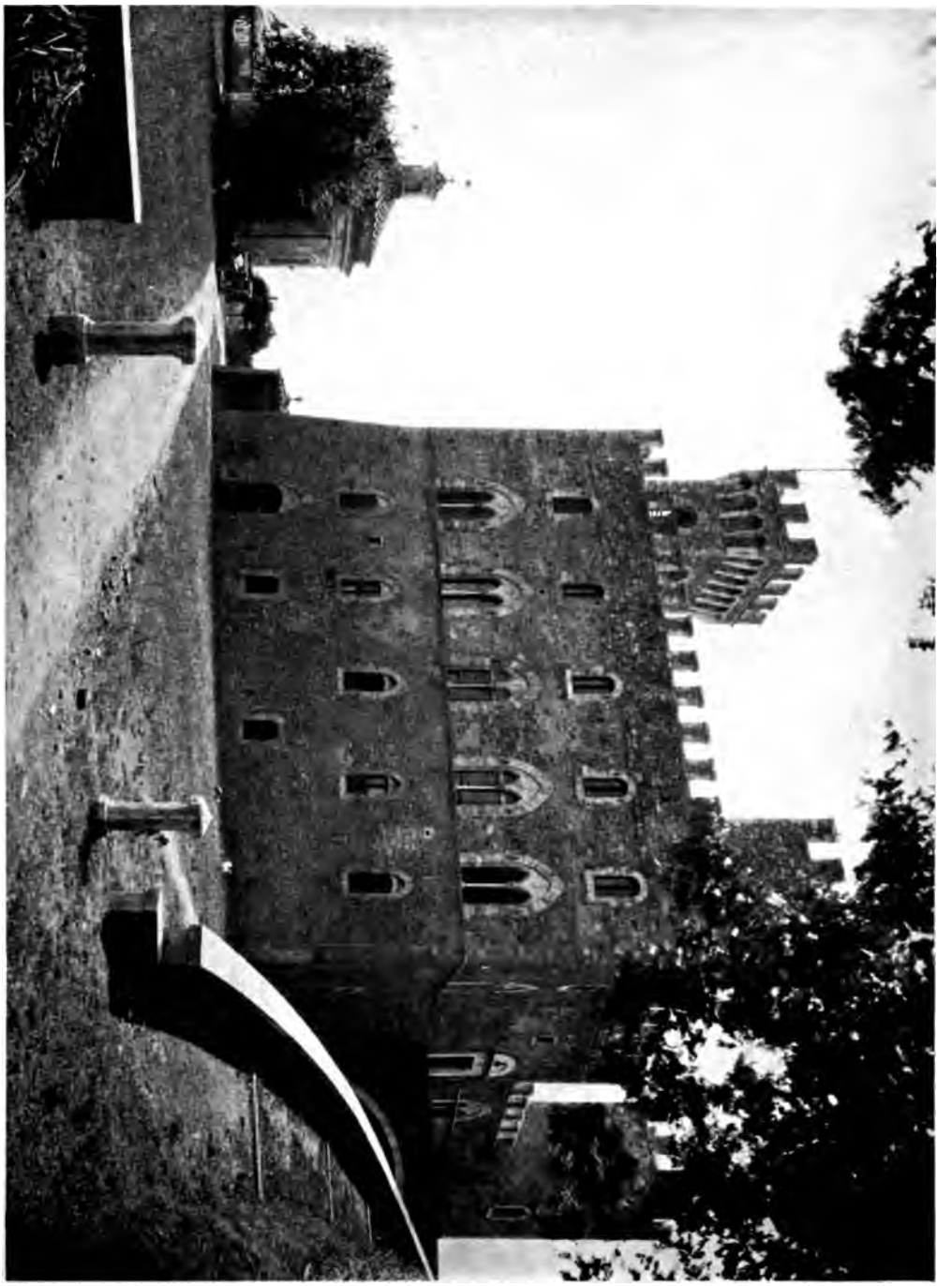


PLATE 102. EAST AND NORTH FRONTS—VILLA CELSA

IL TREBBIO, IN THE MUGELLO

GRIM old Trebbio, towering from the lofty summit of a precipitous hill, almost as difficult of access as the eyrie of an eagle, strictly speaking does not belong amongst the villas at all. It is included in this volume, however, because it is an admirable example of the type of building (Plate 103) from which many villas were derived by a process of remodelling and addition, or which, again, many of them replaced. It is a close connecting link with such buildings as the Villa Celsa, near Siena; it shews the stages of the rudimentary development of domestic accommodations in connexion with the stronghold; and, finally, it doubtless served in some measure as a prototype when Cosimo the Elder caused Michelozzi to build Cafaggiuolo for him at the foot of the hill on whose top Il Trebbio rears its ancient walls (Plate 106). It belongs to the Middle Ages, but it also has its connexion with the Early Renaissance.

Il Trebbio's historical bearing that has the most immediate interest for us is its association with the boyhood of Cosimo de' Medici, the first Grand Duke of Tuscany. On June 11th., in the Year of Grace 1519, the son of Giovanni delle Bande Nere was born in the house of his mother's family, the Palazzo Salviati in Florence. As soon as tidings of the birth of their lord's heir reached them, the peasants at Il Trebbio lighted bonfires on all the hills, and answering fires flamed up throughout Tuscany. It was indeed, an omen of the lustre the newborn infant was destined to shed upon his house and upon the land of his birth.

Maria Salviati soon took her little son to the quiet of Il Trebbio, and there "she watched him grow tall and strong and active, and consoled herself as best she could with his society for the scandalous unfaithfulness of her husband." Here, in the intervals between his sundry journeyings, much of Cosimo's early life was passed in the free air of the Mugello, with his mother and tutor for company part of the time, surrounded by a dozen or more of his father's veteran soldiers, and spending a portion of nearly every day in hunting, hawking and coursing of hounds, or in kindred rustic diversions. It was doubtless from this manner of life at Il Trebbio during his most impressionable years that Cosimo derived that passion for the chase that clung to him to the end of his days.

It was at Il Trebbio that he received word of his election as Duke to succeed his ill-fated cousin Alessandro. And after his marriage to Eleonora of Toledo, his affection for Il Trebbio, when the cares of state permitted, now and again, brought him and his wife and all the court thither for a few days of relaxation. A letter of one of his courtier's gives us a glimpse of the life during one of these visits:

"Yesterday evening," writes Pagni, in August, 1542, "There was great good cheer at il Trebbio, and the wines and water were so cold that they lay heavy on most stomachs . . . . . and this morning, for all that the beds were none too soft, everyone slept until the first hour of the day, when his Excellency, who was the soonest astir, had the trumpet sounded, and without any hounds or hawks with him, went off to Scarperia . . . . . ."

Despite the stern, fortress-like exterior (Plates 103, 104 and 106) of Il Trebbio, the interior has ample provision for domestic comfort. There are spacious, well lighted *saloni* and large airy chambers which are quite as pleasant as those to be found in many of the villas of a later and more urbane age. Notwithstanding the comparatively restricted area covered by the castle, there is space for an agreeable little garden (Plate 105) within the walls. The *cortile,* in the centre of the structure (Plate 107), has one of the ancient characteristic outside staircases of simple but interesting design. To compensate for the toilsome climb to Il Trebbio, there are views from the windows and from the battlements of the tower that it would be difficult to surpass for inspiring beauty.

PLATE 103. GATEWAY—IL TREBBIO, IN THE MUGELLO

PLATE 105. THE GARDEN—IL TREBBIO

PLATE 104. ENTRANCE—IL TREBBIO

PLATE 106. NORTHEAST ANGLE—IL TREBBIO

PLATE 107. THE CORTILE—IL TREBBIO

CAFAGGIUOLO, IN THE MUGELLO

"THE palace of Cafaggiuolo in the Mugello," so Vasari tells us, was designed by Michelozzo Michelozzi for Cosimo the Elder, "Pater Patriæ," in the guise of a fortress amid the woods, the copses and other matters appertaining to fine and famous villas." In 1747 Doctor Brocchi wrote an history of the Mugello and therein describes Cafaggiuolo as "built after the fashion of an ancient fortress with sundry towers, and moats round it and drawbridges. Inside is a large chapel dedicated to the Saints Cosimo and Damiano, protectors of the royal house of Medici. There are likewise many halls and great rooms, with various courtyards, loggie and galleries, which make it (though according to ancient fashion) very noble and magnificent."

What exterior the buildings presented in their ancient condition we may see from the old print (Plate 109), and how the gardens were arranged, as well as the outward aspect of the castle, we may gather from an old painting of the place as it was before the demolition of the central tower and the removal of the outer walls, moat and drawbridge (Plate 108). As will be seen from the last mentioned illustration, the walled gardens, back of the castle, were laid out with geometrical formality, while at the far end were garden buildings of an evidently imposing character. The stables, and other dependencies, were ranged along the east side of the castle, and outside the outer walls, a position they still occupy. (Plate 110).

To reach this historic castle in the Mugello, the very cradle of the Medici race, it is necessary to travel about eighteen miles to the north of Florence, along the Via Bolognese, through mountain scenery of such sort as is to be found only in Tuscany. It was veritably a safe enough retreat for Cosimo's family during times of turmoil and danger in Florence.

Notwithstanding the austere external aspect of Cafaggiuolo (Plates 110 and 113), the interior is neither gloomy nor uncomfortable in its arrangements. Cosimo and his family found it an agreeable place of residence in the fifteenth century, and to-day the disposition of its halls and chambers is still compatible with a luxurious and cheerful mode of rural life. The single-handed clock, on the face of the tower above the *portone* (Plate 111), or else a sun-dial in an equally important position, is a feature generally to be found somewhere about early Tuscan castles and villas. Entering the *portone* (Plate 112), carriages and carts can drive through the high barrel-vaulted passage into the *cortile* in the centre of the building. The entrance to the *cantina* is at one side of the *cortile* (Plate 114) and here the casks of wine are stored, for the estate of Cafaggiuolo is still conducted in the old, patriarchal way. The painted decorations on the walls and vaulting of the *salone* (Plate 115) and dining-room (Plate 116) are modern, but they have been executed in strict accordance with ancient precedent, and as

other much defaced and obliterated painted decorations of a similar character were there before them, they are virtually restorations.

The architectural style of Cafaggiuolo is not what we should expect of the early part of the fifteenth century when it was built, nor is it what we should expect of the genius of Michelozzo, but it was the wish of Cosimo to have it constructed as a castle without any essential departure from the mediæval plan of building. His motive may have been to have a stronghold dwelling that would be safe in event of any uprising. Curiously enough, in executing this unusual commission, Michelozzo employed many classical details to grace a purely mediæval body.

It is with the purely domestic side of life in the Medici household that Cafaggiuolo is associated rather than with the stormy political events or splendid pageantry that one thinks of in connexion with the Palazzo in Florence or the princely villa of Poggio a Cajano. These intimate glimpses, however, are no less engaging in their way and help us to realise the very human side of the actors in the dramatic history of the Renaissance.

Cafaggiuolo and Careggi were Cosimo the Elder's two favourite country retreats, and of the two he is said to have preferred Cafaggiuolo "because all the country he saw from the windows belonged to him." Here Lorenzo the Magnificent and his brother Giuliano spent much of their boyhood, and many letters in the Medicean archives, written to Piero de' Medici by the *fattore* at Cafaggiuolo, afford interesting side lights on the doings of the boys and how the time was spent in the country. In April, 1467, the *fattore* writes: "Yesterday we went a-fishing and they caught enough for their dinner and returned home at a reasonable hour; to-morrow, if they will, we go out riding after dinner and begin to shew them the estate as you ordered." In August of the year following this entry occurs: "Madonna Contessina [the grandmother of Lorenzo and Giuliano] and the boys are well, may God preserve them. Lorenzo wants to smooth the ground in front of Cafaggiuolo. Here we stand in need of wax and tallow candles. I told Madonna Contessina, and she said I was to take white Venetian ones; but they appear to me too honourable for Cafaggiuolo. If it seems so to you also tell Madonna Lucrezia [Lucrezia Tornabuoni, the wife of Piero and mother of the boys] to send us others, and at all events let tallow ones be sent for common use. Yester-morn Madonna Contessina, Lorenzo and Giuliano with the household went on horseback to the Friars of the Wood and heard High Mass. Madonna rode Lorenzo's mule, and was astonished to find herself more agile than she had expected. As it seems to please her we shall go to Comugnole and about in the plain to have a little amusement, but always with two footmen at her stirrup, and we shall do what we can to save her all fatigue and trouble in the management of the house. The boys are having a happy time and go bird-catching and shooting and return at a reasonable hour; they enliven her and the neighbourhood." Lorenzo's

love of the country and natural poetic bent were doubtless strengthened by the periods spent in the Mugello. As young men Lorenzo and Giuliano with their friends, often attended the fairs and weekly markets in the Mugello and thereby increased their intimate acquaintance with the ways of the country folk.

After the Conjuration of the Pazzi and the murder of Giuliano, Lorenzo sent his family to Cafaggiuolo for safety. As Vaughan, in his *Medici Popes,* observes:

"The dark forests of pine and fir, the fleecy flocks, the rough but kindly shepherds of the hills, the keen air of the wind-grieved Apennines, must have had their early influence on any son of Lorenzo the Poet, who loved dearly the life and people of the Tuscan country-side. But in strange contrast with the rural surroundings of airy Cafaggiuolo on its distant mountain-top must have seemed the conversations overheard by the sharp ears of the children between their tutor, Angelo Poliziano, and the handsome young Pico della Mirandola, or the abstruse arguments indulged in by their father with the learned Marsilio Ficino on the chance occasions when Lorenzo was able to join his family in their country retreat. But more often Politian was left alone with his charges and their mother, whose views by no means coincided with those of their chosen preceptor. Fiercely did the anxious Clarice [Clarice Orsini] wrangle with Politian over the methods of education which she wanted to be conducted on her old-fashioned lines, the tutor complaining meanwhile to Madonna Lucrezia, Lorenzo's mother, ... to whom in an amusing letter he sends a comically dismal account of the daily life at Cafaggiuolo, which was by no means a residence to the taste of the fastidious scholar." The 18th of December, 1478, he writes:

"The only news I can send you is that we have here such continual rains that it is impossible to quit the house, and the exercises of the country are exchanged for childish sports within doors. Here I stand by the fireside in my great coat and slippers, so that you might take me for the very figure of Melancholy . . . . . Were we in Florence, we should have some consolation, were it only for that of seeing Lorenzo, when he returned home; but here we are in continual anxiety, and I for my part am half-dead with solitude and weariness. The plague and the war are incessantly in my mind. I lament past evils, and I have no longer at my side my dear Madonna Lucrezia to whom I might unbosom my cares."

Besides complaining to Lucrezia, Politian did not hesitate to upbraid Clarice to her own husband for "wasting the time of his most promising pupil, the precocious little Giovanni," afterwards to become Pope Leo X, "by forcing him to squander his newly acquired power of reading in spelling through the Psalms of David instead of the masterpieces of antiquity." He writes to Lorenzo: "His mother sets him to read the Psalter, of which I do not approve. When she does not interfere with him he makes most wonderful progress." On the other side, Clarice writes to Lorenzo: " . . . I do not like Messer Angelo Poliziano threatening to remain in the house in spite of me. You remember I told you, that if it was your *will* he should stay, I was perfectly contented; and although I have suffered infinite abuse from

him, yet if it be with your consent, I am satisfied. But I cannot believe this to be the case." Lorenzo finally settled the bickerings at Cafaggiuolo by advising Politian to remove to the Villa Medici below Fiesole. Here the spoiled humanist soon recovered his equanimity and composed his *Rusticus,* while Madonna Clarice engaged a priest to continue Giovanni's education.

It was to Cafaggiuolo that Lorenzino de' Medici fled after murdering his cousin Alessandro and waited to see how the news would be received in Florence. Learning that messengers had arrived at Il Trebbio to summon Cosimo to Florence, he fled post haste to Venice. It was to Cafaggiuolo, in April 1533, that Caterina de' Medici, later to become Queen of France, had gone, accompanied by a bevy of noble maidens as her ladies in waiting, to meet and welcome Margaret of Austria, the illegitimate daughter of Charles V., the affianced bride of that same Duke Alessandro whom Lorenzino afterwards murdered.

Quite apart from the connexion with that rare old maiolica called by its name, Cafaggiuolo has its associations with some of the greatest names in Tuscan art. Vespigiano, the birthplace of Giotto, is not far distant, and not much farther is the fortified village of Vicchio where Fra Angelico spent his early years. More intimate still is the association with Donatello. Piero de' Medici, conformably to the wishes of his father, Cosimo the Elder, presented Donatello with an house and farm belonging to the estate. Delighted at first, upon becoming a landed proprietor, after a year's experience of farming Donatello besought Piero to take back the gift. " Life," he said, " was far too short to be spent in listening to the incessant complaints of an ignorant and tedious peasant, whose roof was always being carried off by the wind, his crops damaged by hail, or his cattle seized for arrears of taxes." Piero laughed heartily at Donatello's inability to cope with the astute Mugello peasant and exchanged the farm for a pension.

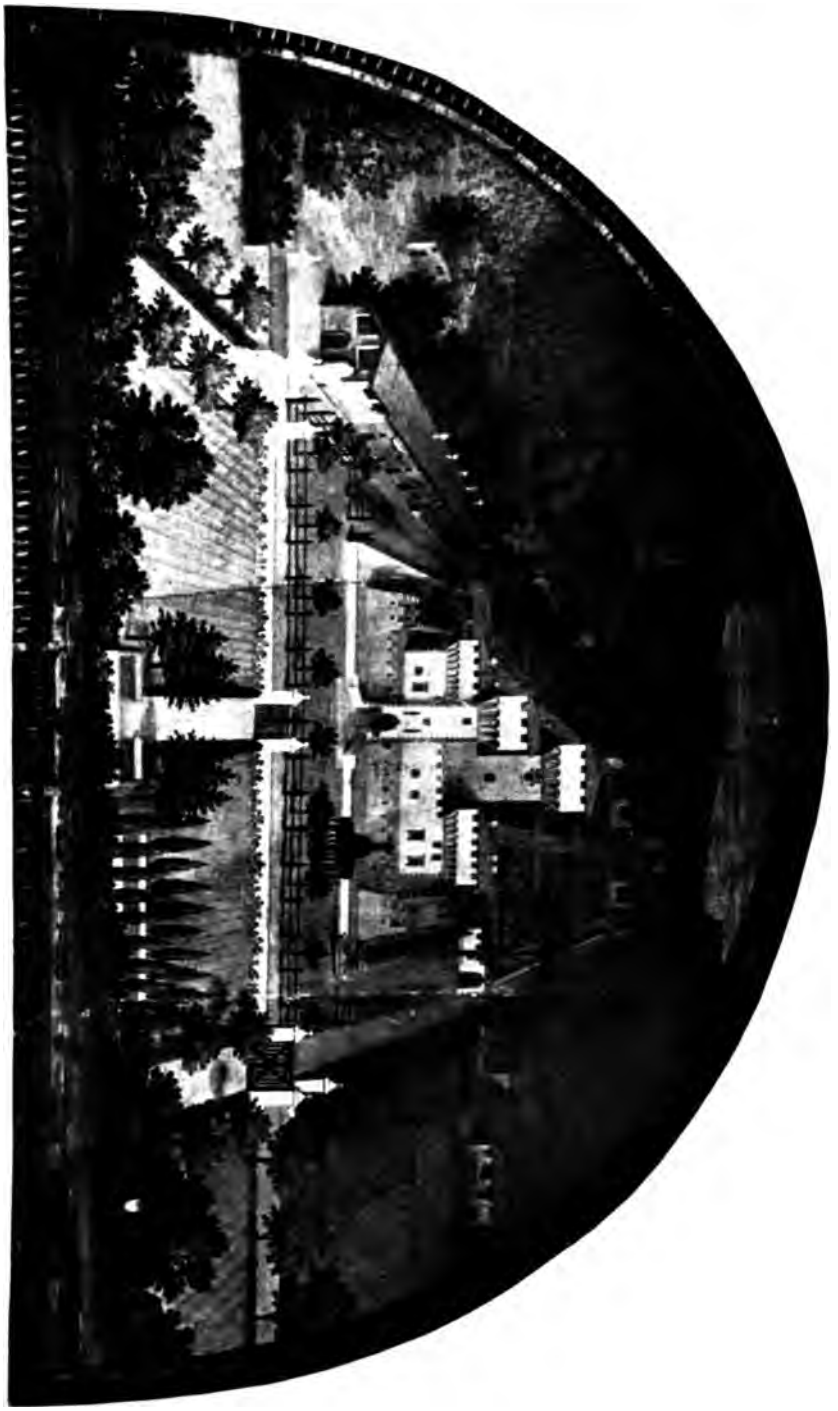


PLATE 108. CASTLE AND GARDEN FROM AN OLD PAINTING—CAFAGGIUOLO, IN THE MUGELLO

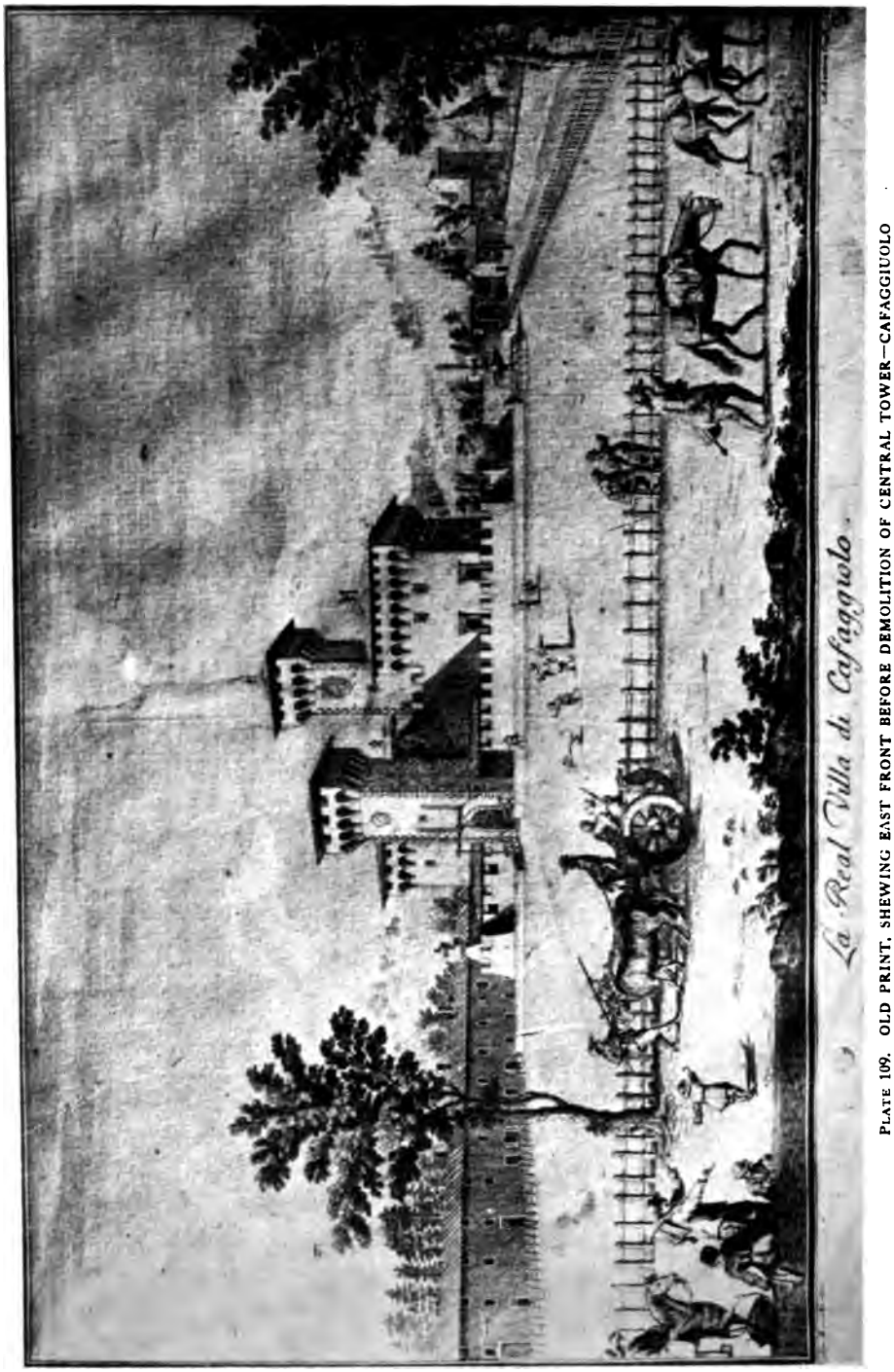


PLATE 109. OLD PRINT, SHEWING EAST FRONT BEFORE DEMOLITION OF CENTRAL TOWER—CAFAGGIUOLO

PLATE 110. SOUTH AND EAST FRONTS—CAFAGGIUOLO

PLATE 111. EAST TOWER AND ENTRANCE—CAFAGGIUOLO

PLATE 112. PORTONE—CAFAGGIUOLO

PLATE 113. EAST AND NORTH FRONTS—CAFAGGIUOLO

PLATE 114. THE CORTILE—CAFAGGIUOLO

PLATE 115. SALONE—CAFAGGIUOLO

PLATE 116. DINING ROOM—CAFAGGIUOLO

POGGIO A CAJANO

POGGIO A CAJANO, lying about ten miles to the west of Florence on the road to Pistoia, according to an old tradition, takes its name from an ancient Roman citizen, one Caio, who is said to have owned a villa in that place. As a matter of actual history, we know that the site was once occupied by a fortress belonging to the Cancellieri family of Pistoia, who sold it in 1420 to Messer Palla di Noferi Strozzi for 7390 golden florins. The Strozzi altered the ruinous fortress into a villa which for a long time was called the Villa Ambra, a name taken from the little stream nearby. Being confiscated from the Strozzi, the estate passed into the hands of the Rucellai and others, from whom Lorenzo the Magnificent acquired it in the second half of the fifteenth century. He thereupon entrusted to Giuliano da Sangallo the task of reconstructing and embellishing the villa. This work Sangallo completed about 1485. The villa, as we see it to-day, is substantially as Sangallo left it, with the exception of the horse-shoe staircase and the maiolica frieze above the loggia. The staircase (Plates 118 and 119), is by Stefano d'Ugolino da Siena, and the blue and white frieze (Plate 120) was executed by one of the Della Robbia family.

From the time of Lorenzo, Poggio a Cajano was a favourite residence of the Medici, and different members of that powerful family spent money lavishly in enriching it, especially Pope Leo X and the first Grand Dukes. It was Leo X who employed Andrea del Sarto, Franciabigio and Pontormo to decorate with frescoes the great barrel-vaulted hall (Plate 125) which Sangallo had constructed especially to please Lorenzo the Magnificent. Other painters and architects from time to time had an hand in the enrichment of Poggio a Cajano, amongst them Filippino Lippi, Alessandro Allori, Giorgio Vasari, and Bartolommeo Ammanati, of whom the last named added a corbelled staircase (Plate 126) and a fireplace (Plate 127) in the apartments of the infamous adventuress, Bianca Cappella who finally achieved her ambition to become the Grand Duchess of Tuscany.

The grounds and park of Poggio a Cajano, according to contemporary descriptions and evidence of an old painting (Plate 117) must once have been a triumph of Renaissance garden design. Unfortunately, the *giardino inglese* madness was responsible for the destruction of the ancient scheme and now little remains save an uninteresting and unedifying collection of decent commonplaces where once was beauty. The clock of Baroque design surmounting the eaves above the loggia (Plate 118) was not a part of Sangallo's scheme but was added much later, as old pictures of the façade testify. The pediment bearing the Medici *stemma* flanked by long ribbon streamers carved in high relief (Plate 120) badly upsets the scale of the composition, and there are one or two other painful incongruities the presence of which it is hard to explain. The loggia, seen from within (Plate

121), however, is a superb piece of work and goes far towards atoning for flaws that are apparent from other points of view.

So imposing was the aspect of Poggio a Cajano that the Emperor Charles V., when he spent a day there in May, 1536, observed that "such walls were not meet for a private citizen, and before leaving for Lucca he created the bastard Alessandro de' Medici Duke of Tuscany," making this incident an excuse for complying with the importunities on that score to which he had been subjected for some time previously.

It was at Poggio a Cajano, in the latter part of June, 1539, that Duke Cosimo and his bride, Eleonora of Toledo, whom he was fetching from Pisa, spent several days prior to their state entry into Florence. Cosimo writes to his father-in-law, Don Pedro of Toledo: "The Signora Duchessa and I have now come here to il Poggio, a spot near the city, where we shall rest until Sunday which will be the day of her Excellency's entry into Florence." This period of "rest" was a season of brave doings and festivities, and Vasari has left a picture, now in the Palazzo Vecchio, pourtraying Eleonora's arrival in state at the villa, whither she was to come so often afterwards on hunting expeditions when her sport-loving husband moved from place to place with much of his court in attendance.

That such attendance was not always wholly relished by the courtiers, in an age of practical jokes, may be gathered from the following extract from a letter written by one of the Duke's secretaries to his Major-Domo, who was in Florence: "As Vostra Signoria knows, these Bishops are ever curious to learn beforehand what his Excellency desires to do. Yesterday, the sun being hidden and the weather tolerably cool, his Excellency, with intent to go hunting, dined early and said that he desired to go riding. Whereupon the Bishops and one or two others were burning to know whither he proposed to ride, and therefore his Excellency and the Major-domo resolved to play them a trick and announced that his Excellency designed to go hunting beyond the hills that are towards Civita, and to lie last evening at Stabbia, going thence this morning to Pistoia. And on this the Major-domo . . . . . had some of the mules loaded, taking care to pack their Excellencies' bed. Seeing this, there was the greatest noise and uproar in the world among the Bishops and gentlemen, and each had his goods packed and sent towards Stabbia . . . . and their Excellencies, when the chase was ended, returned to il Poggio, saying that it was too late to go to Stabbia, and began to laugh and jest over these curious folk who had neither beds nor luggage . . . .," an exquisite joke that caused merriment all the evening.

Twenty-six years after the first arrival of the Duchess, Eleonora of Toledo, at Poggio a Cajano, Francesco, the son of Cosimo and Eleonora, met his bride, the Arch-Duchess Joan of Austria at the same place. During Joan's lifetime, Poggia a Cajano was the favourite residence of the infamous Bianca Cappella, Francesco's mistress and, after Joan's death, his second

wife. The story goes that upon the occasion of a visit from Cardinal Ferdinando de' Medici at Poggio a Cajano, in the autumn of 1587, the amiable Bianca with her own hands prepared a pie for her brother-in-law. Fortunately for the Cardinal, he declined to eat it, but Francesco, suspecting nothing, ate heartily of it, whereupon Bianca in desperation did the same. As a result, both Francesco and Bianca died not long after from the effects of the poison Bianca had intended for the Cardinal. The Cardinal then succeeded to the Grand Duchy.

The morose Cosimo III and his wife, the Princess Marguerite Louise, daughter of the Duc d'Orleans spent some time at Poggio a Cajano and it was to Poggio that this unfortunate and indiscreet lady retired for some time after her escapades of tickling the cook had induced a severe reprimand from her sedate spouse and before she finally returned to Paris to spend the balance of her life " in love and intrigue."

For many years Poggio a Cajano was a part of the Crown Estates but is now, by a gift of the King, the property of the Nation.

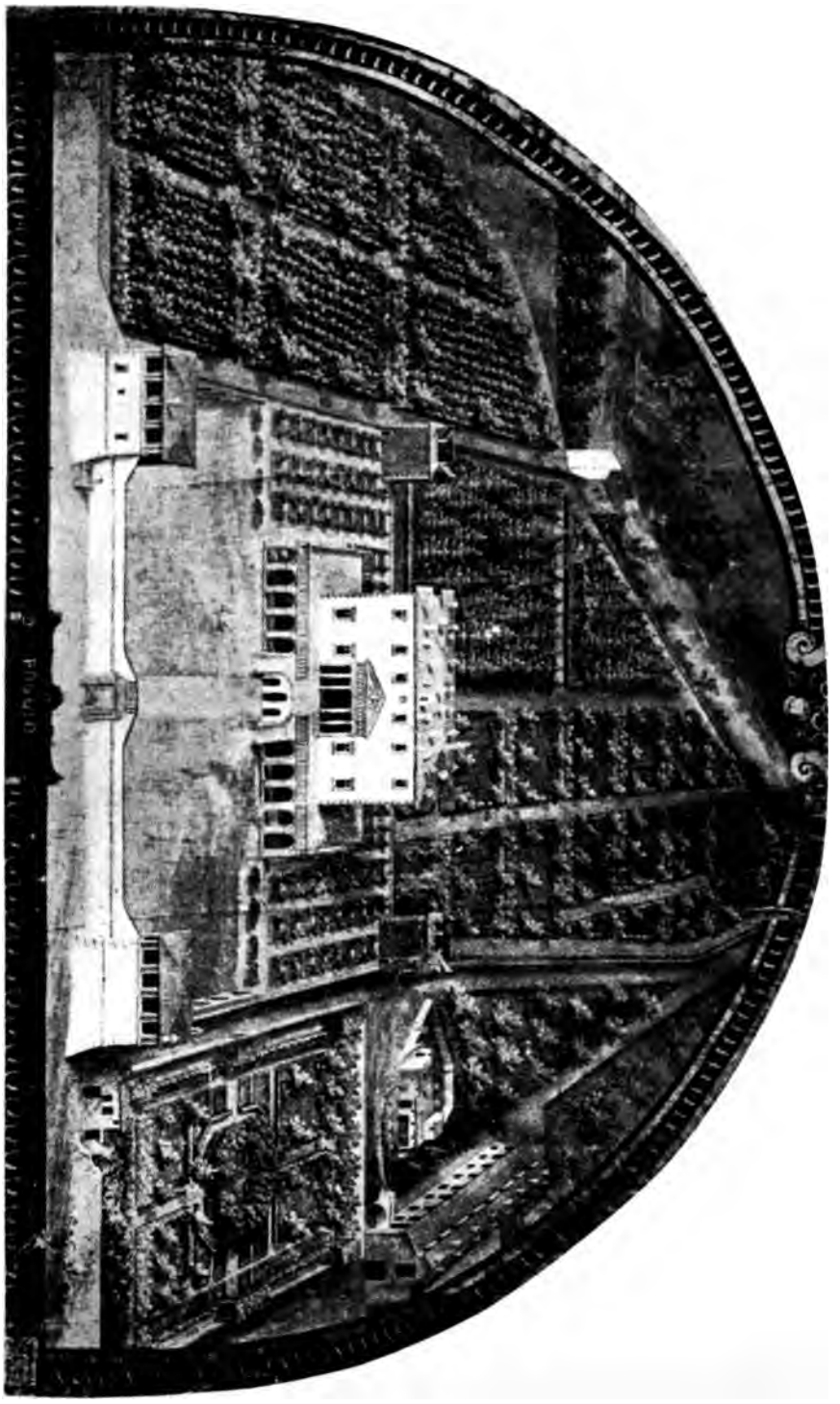


PLATE 117. PALAZZO AND ANCIENT GARDEN PLAN, FROM AN OLD PAINTING—POGGIO A CAJANO

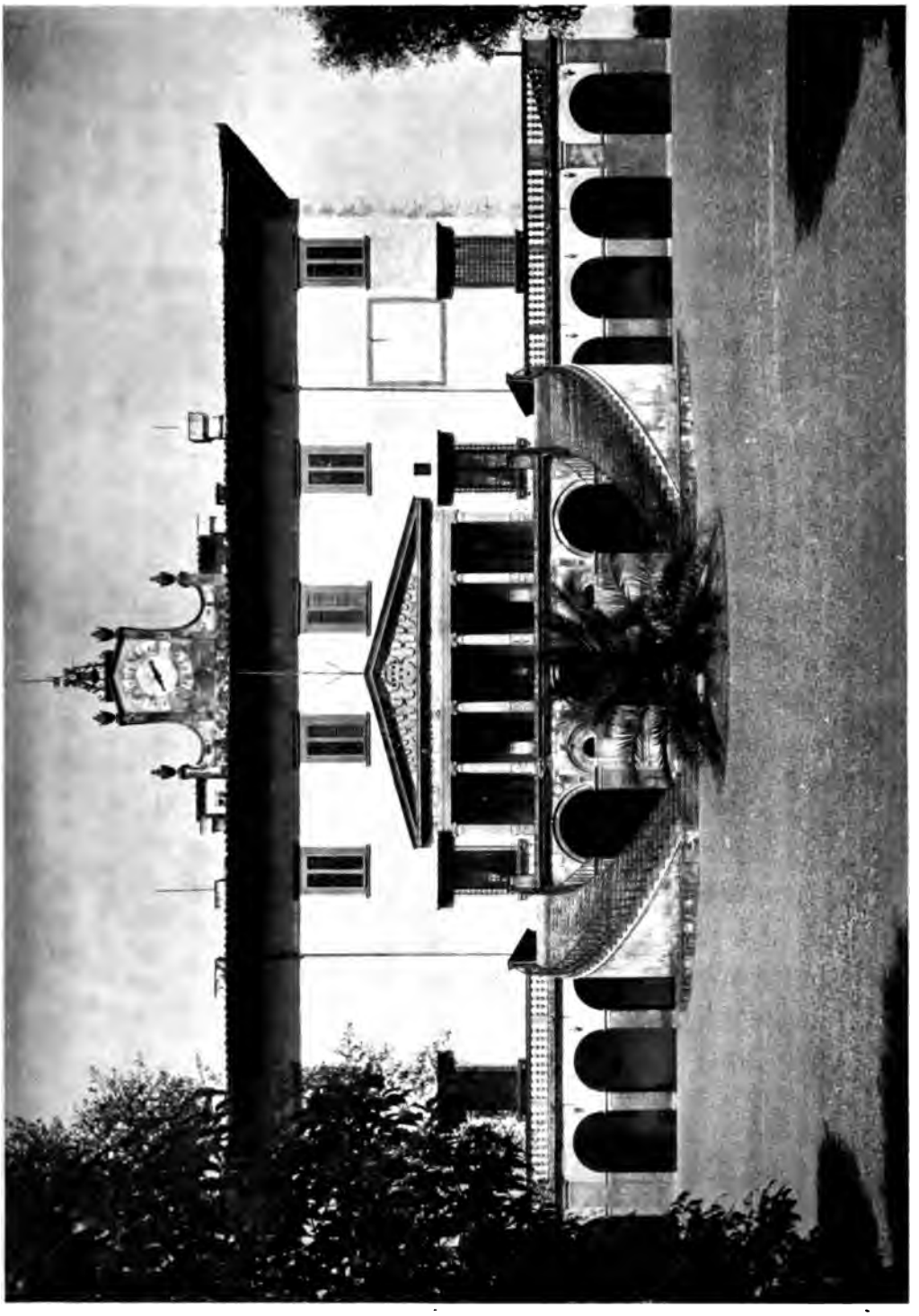


PLATE 118. SOUTH FRONT—POGGIO A CAJANO

PLATE 119. STAIR AND TERRACE DETAILS, SOUTH FRONT—POGGIO A CAJANO

PLATE 120. LOGGIA, SOUTH FRONT—POGGIO A CAJANO

PLATE 121. WITHIN THE LOGGIA, SOUTH FRONT—POGGIO A CAJANO

PLATE 122. TERRACE, SOUTH FRONT—POGGIO A CAJANO

PLATE 123. EAST FRONT, FROM GARDEN—POGGIO A CAJANO

PLATE 124. GROTTO UNDER NORTH TERRACE—POGGIO A CAJANO

PLATE 125. GREAT HALL.—POGGIO A CAJANO

PLATE 126. STAIRCASE, ANTEROOM, APARTMENTS OF BIANCA CAPPELLA—POGGIO A CAJANO

PLATE 127. FIREPLACE, BY BARTOLOMMEO AMMANATI, ANTEROOM, APARTMENTS OF BIANCA CAPPELLA—POGGIO A CAJANO

LE CORTI, NEAR SAN CASCIANO, VAL DI PESA

ALTHOUGH Le Corti has been perched upon its lofty hilltop for six centuries, or perhaps somewhat longer, its present form dates from the early part of the sixteenth century (about 1520) when the villa was greatly enlarged and its aspect recast to accord with the accepted architectural ideals of the period. The bold mass is singularly imposing and, with its distinctive twin towers (Plate 131), the upper storeys of which contain the seigneurial dovecotes (Plate 134), the building seems to dominate the whole countryside. The towers appear to have been constructed solely as a pleasing conceit of the architect's invention as there is no evidence of either of them being a survivor of the ancient type of fortified tower, to which allusion has been made, as the nucleus about which the later dwelling grew. Indeed, their position at the extreme angles of the structure would negative such an hypothesis.

In plan the house is an hollow square built about a large stone-paved *cortile* (Plates 136 and 137) with an arcaded and vaulted loggia extending around all four sides of the ground floor. There were originally loggias on the east, west, and north sides of the first floor as well, but these were walled in at a later date (Plate 136) to form long galleries, one of which, the eastern, is the family portrait gallery (Plate 141) wherein the owner, Prince Corsini, has gathered together a most interesting collection of originals and copies, arranged in chronological sequence. Apart from their historical value, the paintings afford a valuable commentary upon Italian portraiture for many centuries back. The north gallery (Plate 142) is given over to a collection of prints, while the western (Plate 139) is the chapel gallery. The principal staircase ascends from the western loggia of the ground floor and gives access to the chapel gallery directly beside the doorway (Plate 138) into the ante-chapel.

In the chapel itself, which contains an altar-piece and frescoes by Bernardino Poccetti, the walls are hung with alternate breadths of blue and yellow brocade (Plate 140) upon which, in reverse colour, are *appliquès* the foliated patterns while the flowers thereon are fully embroidered. All of this is *cinquecento* work and it is quite possible that the stitchery may have been done by the ladies of the family as a task of devotion.

The stuccoed walls of the exterior are of a warm brownish grey which shews tawny salmon in the light of the westering sun. The shutters are painted the customary light green. The trims of the doorways and windows are of a brownish-toned *pietra serena*. While the rustication of the east and west doorways (Plates 132 and 133) is exceedingly bold and vigorous, the mouldings of the stonework exhibit a notable degree of refinement.

Unlike most of the villas of the neighbourhood, Le Corti stands forth in severe and independent isolation, in the midst of an unadorned and treeless

plateau without any mollifying agency of gardens, *boscheria*, or *viale* of cypresses as items of immediate environment. Nevertheless, its aspect is not harsh. The fine old *viale* of huge cypresses, which ascends the hill from the gate (Plate 129) and whimsically turns at right angles after achieving the summit, so as to fetch a straight approach to the east front, stops abruptly about eighty yards from the house, leaving an impressive vista between the terminal trees (Plate 130).

On the north and south sides, beyond the low bounding walls, the ground falls rapidly away through orchards and vineyards, while on the west side, just below the verge of the hill, is the formal flower garden (Plate 143) with its box-edged beds and its rows of lemon trees in huge earthen pots, its arrangement following the old traditions.

Considered as an entire composition—house and environment together—Le Corti presents a striking combination of virile austerity and restraint along with finished refinement and delicacy, a combination which must be dwelt upon for some time before one becomes conscious of its full force.

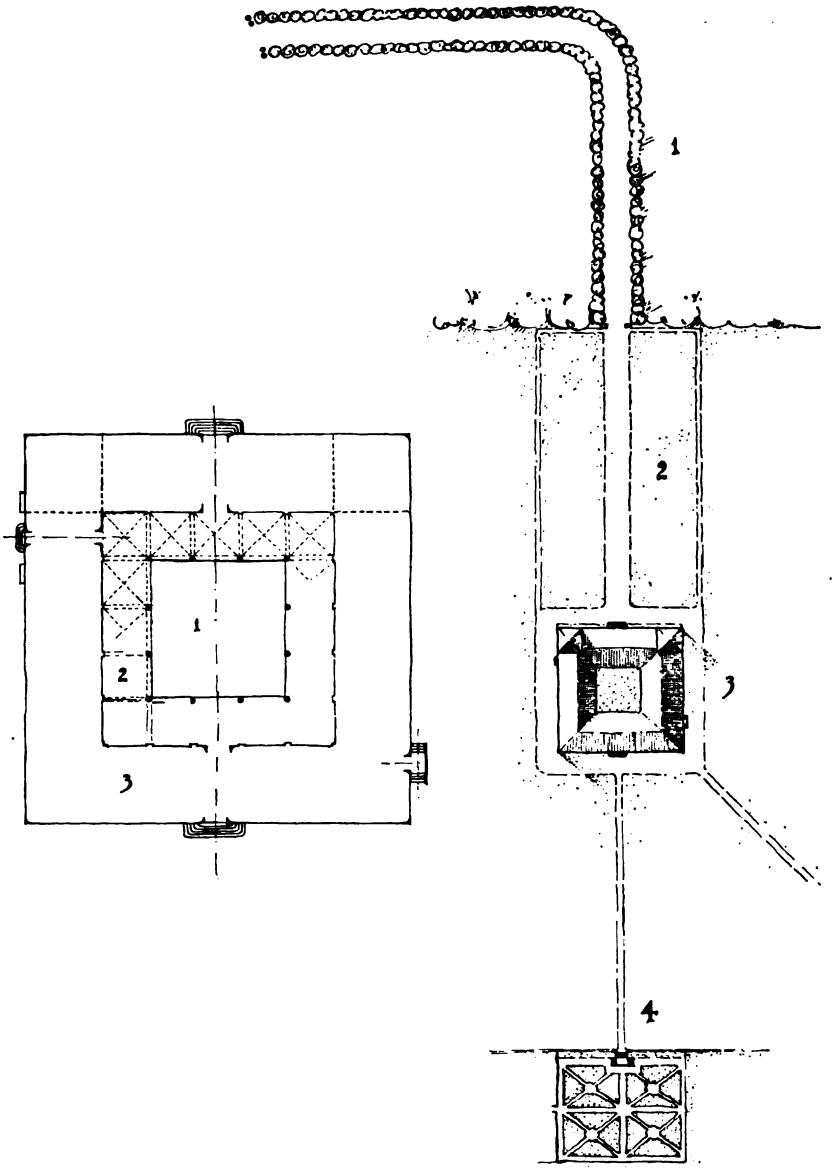


PLATE 128. PLOT PLAN—LE CORTI, SAN CASCIANO, VAL DI PESA

KEY TO PLAN

Left.
1. Cortile
2. Loggia
3. Body of House

Right
1. Cypress Viale
2. Lawn
3. House
4. Flower Garden

PLATE 129. THE GATE—LE CORTI, NEAR SAN CASCIANO

PLATE 130. EAST FRONT—LE CORTI

PLATE 131. EAST AND SOUTH FRONTS—LE CORTI

PLATE 132. SOUTH AND WEST FRONTS—LE CORTI

PLATE 133. EAST PORTONE AND NORTHEAST TOWER—LE CORTI

PLATE 134. NORTH FRONT—LE CORTI

PLATE 135. NORTH DOOR—LE CORTI

PLATE 136. THE CORTILE—LE CORTI

PLATE 137. THE STAIRCASE FROM THE CORTILE—LE CORTI

PLATE 138. THE CHAPEL DOOR, FROM THE ANTE-CHAPEL.—LE CORTI

PLATE 139. THE CHAPEL GALLERY—LE CORTI

PLATE 140. THE CHAPEL WALL —LE CORTI

PLATE 141. THE PORTRAIT GALLERY—LE CORTI

PLATE 142 THE NORTH GALLERY—LE CORTI

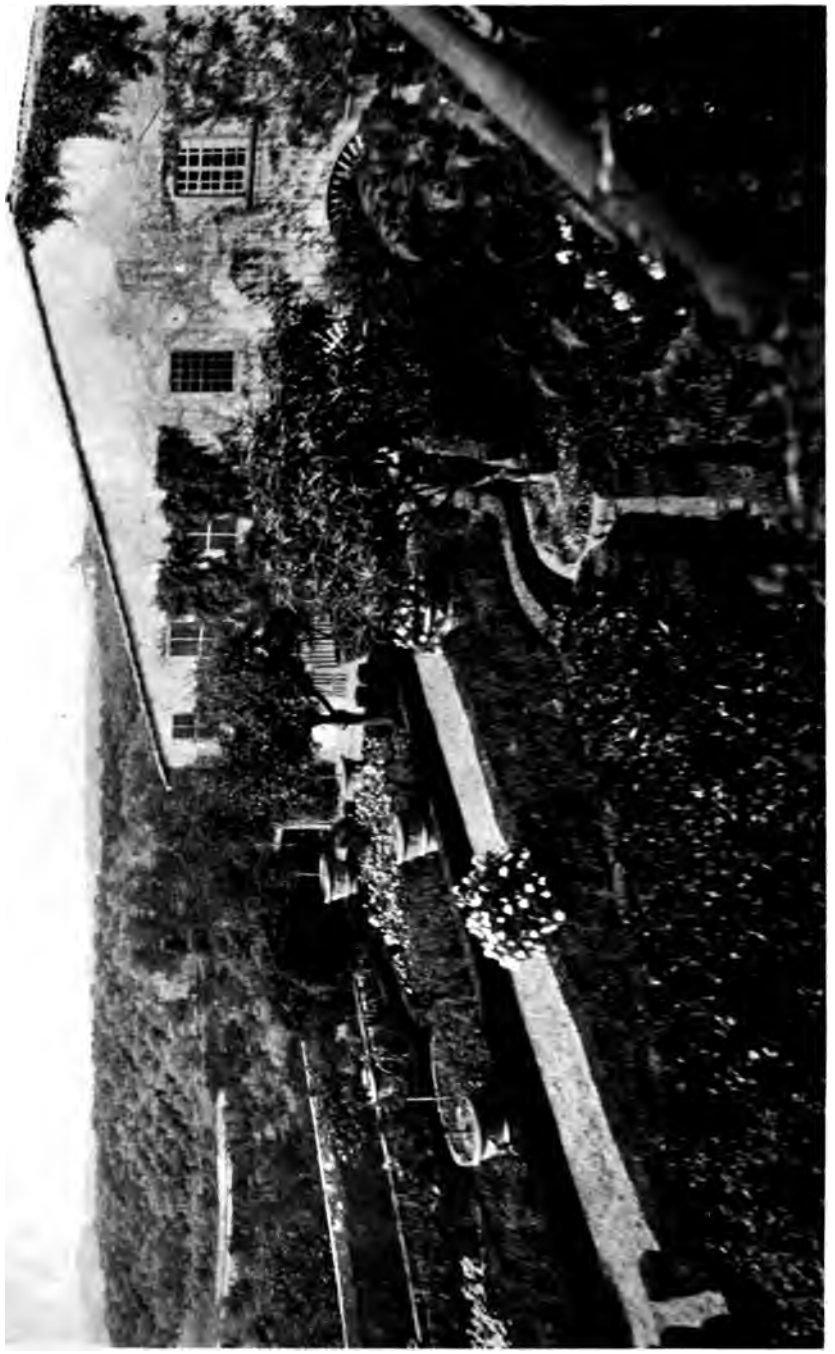


PLATE 143. THE FLOWER GARDEN—LE CORTI

VILLA DEI COLLAZZI, NEAR TAVARNUZZE

THE Villa dei Collazzi, near Tavarnuzze, in one of the most beautiful parts of Tuscany, not many miles to the south of Florence, was built early in the sixteenth century, and if there be any truth in a persistent local tradition, it was designed by no less a person than Michelangelo. We know, as a matter of actual history, that he was a close friend of Messer Agostino Dini for whom the villa was planned on the site of the ancient Castel Buondelmonti. Baldinucci records that "Santi di Tito, scholar of Bronzino in painting, and of Vasari in architecture, worked for Agostino Dini at Giogoli . . . . . For this same Agostino he also painted one of his finest altar-pieces." This statement, however, is no proof that the conception was not Michelangelo's. From what we know of Michelangelo's many unfinished undertakings and of the pressure under which he worked, it is not at all improbable that Santi di Tito may have been called upon to carry to completion the work begun by the greater master. Furthermore, bits of evidence gleaned from sundry private archives, seem to confiirm the correctness of the attribution to Michelangelo's design. In any event, certain it is that the Villa dei Collazzi is quite worthy of his authorship.

The approach is from the east and a fine viale of cypresses (Plate 144) brings one directly upon a broad terrace (Plate 147) immediately before the principal or north front of the villa. The traditional Tuscan plan of building the house about the *cortile* was observed, the *cortile* being enclosed on three sides and open on the fourth. The design of the building, with its two tiers of loggias (Plates 149 and 151) about the *cortile,* is in itself most engaging, but apart from that, one of the features that most forcibly impresses the visitor is the noble breadth of scale upon which the whole structure is planned. Some idea of the scale may be obtained from the fact that the platform (Plates 145 and 146) occupied by the stone-paved *cortile* is more than eighty feet across between the east and west wings.

Crowning the summit of a high eminence, the Villa dei Collazzi commands an enchanting outlook over the Val d'Arno, and the rising ground beyond, "where villas are strewn like diamonds on the sunlit hills." In the nearer foreground are the pine-covered slopes, and the vineyards and olive orchards.

The entrance through the loggia (Plate 148) admits one directly to the great hall (Plates 156 and 157), an enormous apartment with a barrel vaulted ceiling. The frescoed panels framed about with plaster mouldings in high relief are not co-eval with the house, but were added during the eighteenth century. From this great hall, at each side, open out series of rooms and passages. Elsewhere than in the great hall, many of the rooms on the ground floor have beamed ceilings, the moulded corbels supporting the

beams, the beams, the joists, and the boards bearing the floor above, exhibiting painted decorations in the manner already described in the introductory chapters. Other rooms, where the ceilings are not beamed and embellished with painting, are ceiled with lunette vaulting.

The stuccoed walls are of a warm brownish colour, rather more brown than is the case with many other villas of this date. The trims and pillars are of *pietra serena* in which the brown tones often predominate over the colder grey that one so often finds, especially in the neighbourhood of Fiesole.

Whether or not one chooses to credit the tradition attributing the authorship of the Villa dei Collazzi to Michelangelo, it is perfectly patent that the structure has more architectural pretension than most of the contemporary villas in the vicinity. Whoever the architect may have been, he displayed a knowledge of compostion and balance of no mean order. There is a satisfying finality about the whole conception that proclaims the genius of the designer, and this quality is quite as evident in the south front (Plate 155) as in the north. In the matter of detail (Plates 150 and 152-154), also, there is discernible the nicest discrimination that came not by accident, and close scrutiny again and again reveals a pleasing and all too rare combination of adroit delicacy with vigour.

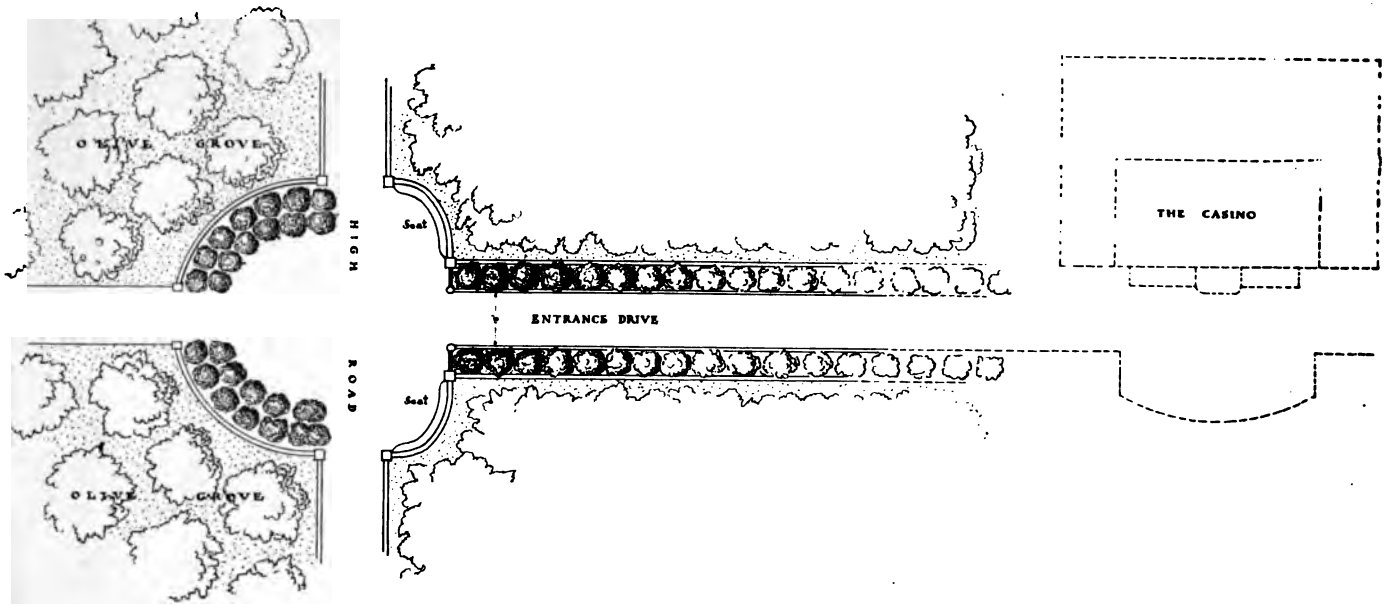


PLATE 144. PLAN OF ENTRANCE.—VILLA DEI COLLAZZI, TAVARNUZZE, NEAR FLORENCE

PLATE 145. APPROACH TO CORTILE—VILLA DEI COLLAZZI

PLATE 146. ENTRANCE TO CORTILE—VILLA DEI COLLAZZI

PLATE 147. NORTH FRONT—VILLA DEI COLLAZZI

PLATE 148. NORTH LOGGIA—VILLA DEI COLLAZZI

PLATE 149 SOUTHWEST ANGLE OF CORTILE—VILLA DEI COLLAZZI

PLATE 150. DOORWAY IN WEST WING—VILLA DEI COLLAZZI

PLATE 151. GROUND AND FIRST FLOOR LOGGIAS—VILLA DEI COLLAZZI

PLATE 152. SOUTH LOGGIA, FIRST FLOOR—VILLA DEI COLLAZZI

PLATE 153. DETAIL, FIRST FLOOR LOGGIA, NORTH FRONT—VILLA DEI COLLAZZI

PLATE 154. DETAIL, FIRST FLOOR LOGGIA, SOUTH FRONT · VILLA DEI COLLAZZI

PLATE 155. SOUTH FRONT—VILLA DEI COLLAZZI

PLATE 156. GREAT HALL—VILLA DEI COLLAZZI

PLATE 157. FIREPLACE IN GREAT HALL—VILLA DEI COLLAZZI

THE VILLA BELCARO, NEAR SIENA

BELCARO, situate about three miles to the southwest of the Porta Fontebranda, was once a mediæval castle but in the early part of the sixteenth century was remodelled by Baldassare Peruzzi for the Turamini family and converted into a most urbane and delicately beautiful villa, although in certain particulars some of the original character of the dour old stronghold was retained.

Crowning the extreme spur of an hill, Belcaro is plainly visible for a long distance to those approaching from almost any direction—a site of great natural strength and manifest defensive value in an age of chronic warfare, likewise a site that keenly stimulates the imagination in this more pacific age of ours by its peculiarly dramatic emphasis. Viewed from afar—and, indeed, the illusion continues until one comes very near—Belcaro appears as a low oblong building resting upon an immense close-cropped cushion of luxuriant green. This curious impression is produced by a dense growth of ancient ilex trees, completely surrounding and concealing the walls, their tops trimmed off even with the tops of the battlements. And as you walk along on the battlements you are still haunted by the notion of being partially engulfed in a cushion of living green, for the tops of the ilex trees (Plate 172), on a line with your middle, spread far outward from the walls with the evenness and close texture of a gigantic, well trimmed hedge. As may be readily imagined, a walk on the battlements about the circuit of the walls produces an unique sensation with a strong dash of unreality about it. From the *belvedere* (Plate 172) built at the top of a bastion there is a truly inspiring view for miles over country that beggars description.

The curious site of Belcaro, with almost precipitous declivities on nearly every side, imposed limitations upon any extensive metamorphosis of the mediæval castle into a Renaissance villa. Furthermore, the Turamini seem to have felt the necessity of preserving some of the defensive character of the place. Even after its transformation, Belcaro was well able to withstand assault. As a matter of actual fact, Belcaro did hold out for a time against Cosimo I. de' Medici, and was bombarded by his cannon, during that memorable campaign that ultimately humbled Siena and made Cosimo master of all Tuscany. A memorial of this siege (Plate 173) is still to be seen in the cannon balls embedded in one of the walls, " pills of misery," and a tablet inscribed with the legend that follows:

FERREOS TORMENTORUM GLOBOS
QUIBUS
COSIMO MEDICEO SENAS OBSIDENTE
AN: MDLIV
CASTRUM HOC
IMPETITUM EXPUGNATUMQUE FUIT
AD MEMORIAM SERVATOS
HOSPES INTUERE

In view of the conditions confronting him, Peruzzi, therefore, confined his efforts toward polite embellishments to the space within the walls. Departing from the time-honoured and hitherto commonly accepted usage—a usage often attributed to the survival of Etruscan tradition—that placed the *cortile* either wholly within the body of the house or, at least, enclosed it on three sides with the structure of the dwelling, Peruzzi adopted an entirely different plan. Along the north side of an oblong brick-paved *cortile* or courtyard he placed the dwelling (Plates 162 and 164), along the south side he ranged the dependencies (Plate 165) in a uniform mass with a façade of formal treatment, while the east and west ends he closed with screens (Plates 160, 161 and 166). The loggia as an important domestic adjunct he dispensed with. In this process he changed the centre of organisation. The *cortile* was still the centre of organisation, but the distribution of the major units of the plan was different. The *cortile* and the structures opening upon it were thoroughly symmetrical and balanced in their disposition; the asymmetrical parts of the scheme were shut off by the screens at the east and west ends of the courtyard. Outside the west screen is the outer courtyard (Plate 160) which is entered through a strongly fortified gateway (Plate 159) with massive, iron-bound doors; beyond the eastern screen is the parterre (Plate 169), at one side of which is the chapel nestling in an angle of the outer walls. Running through the whole scheme it is easy to detect a note of modernism—to perceive a definite break with the customs of the Middle Ages and the Early Renaissance alike, and the dawn of a fresh architectural impulse.

The dwelling is a compact, oblong mass (Plates 164 and 169) whose walls are covered with a smooth, light-coloured stucco while the details are wrought in the native limestone that more or less resembles Roman travertin. It is a masterly composition characterised by urbane simplicity. It is that kind of simplicity, however, that discloses under careful analysis the complexities and subtle judgement that have entered into its achievement. The perfect balance of proportions and exquisite delicacy of restrained detail could never be the result of chance or of haphazard designing. Genius and skill combined are the indispensable pre-requisites to the accomplishment of such a finished performance.

The façade of the dependencies (Plate 165) on the south side of the courtyard is no less gratifying than the façade of the dwelling opposite. Indeed, in one way it is even more gratifying, because it is more unusual, considering the nature of the buildings thus dignified by a seemly, well-matured scheme of embellishment. The treatment accorded these subsidiary buildings has quite as much poise and distinction as the rest of the

composition. Furthermore, there is a pleasing touch of diversity in the materials employed. The walls are of a tawny pink brick while the doorways (Plate 167), belt courses and other details are of the coarse-grained limestone used elsewhere.

Although the manner in which Peruzzi treated Belcaro is academic and severely restrained, the most confirmed romanticist could not complain that adherence to academic standards in any way stifled his spontaneity. It would be difficult to discover more striking examples of well-schooled but wholly untrammelled invention than are to be seen in the design of both the west and east screens (Plates 160, 161, 163, 166 and 168).

The parterre beyond the east screen is planned according to the formal conception of the age of its creation. Any other treatment of so small a space would inevitably be grotesque. It is only by adhering to the ancient methods that the best can be got out of it.

Belcaro is unique amongst Tuscan villas in its conditions and environment. It is not a thing that could be reproduced. It is not a thing that anyone ought to wish to reproduce. Divorced from its own special setting and from its own particular past it would be meaningless. But Belcaro is likewise a rare architectural jewel, and apart from its significance as a landmark in a new era of villa design, it is a storehouse replete with inspiration and invaluable lessons for them that have eyes to see and the will to learn.

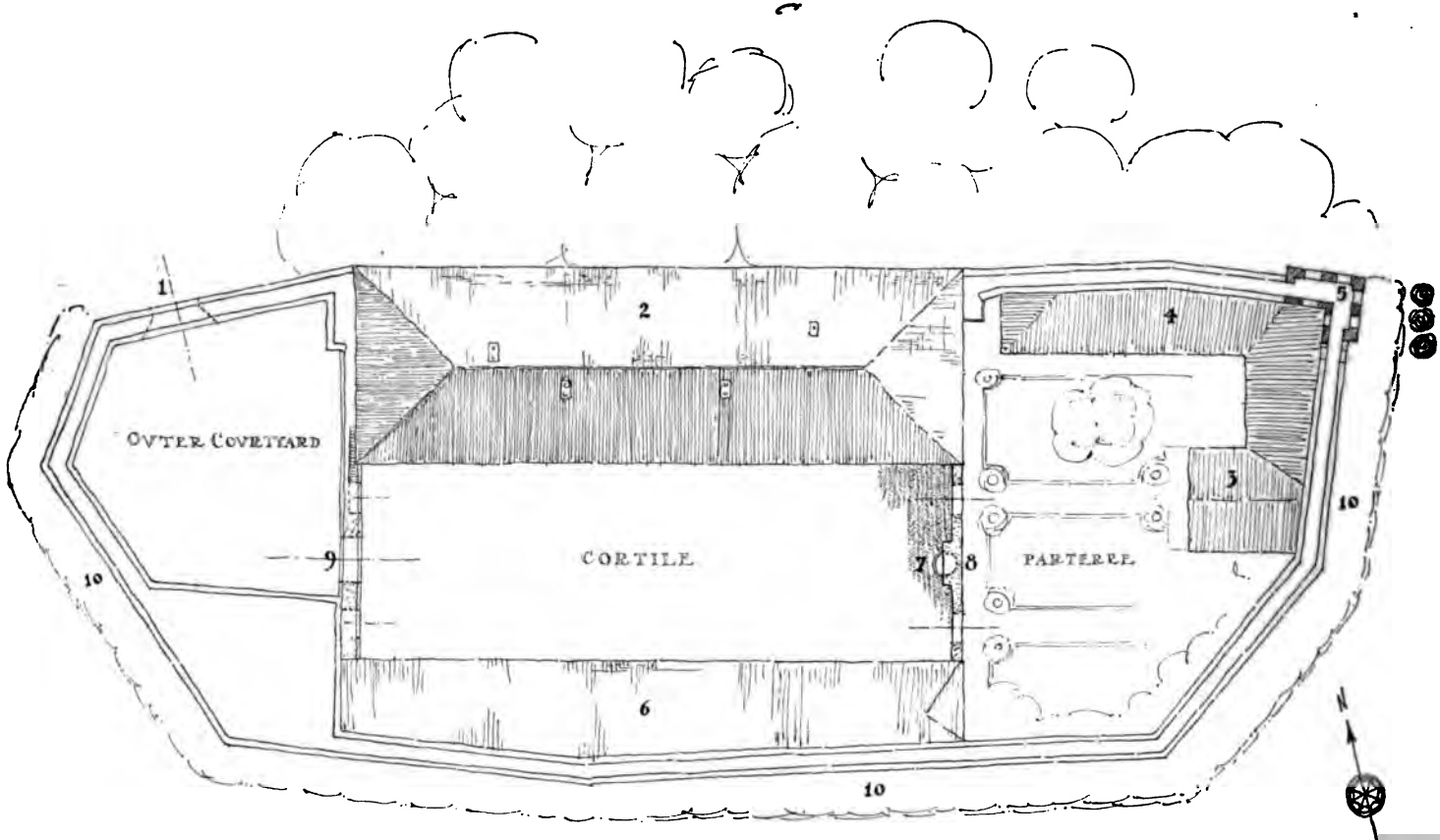


PLATE 158. PLOT PLAN—BELCARO, NEAR SIENA

KEY TO PLAN

1. Gate
2. Master's House
3. Chapel
4. Lemon House
5. Belvedere
6. Dependencies
7. Well Head
8. East Screen
9. West Screen
10. Ilex Trees

PLATE 159. OUTER GATE—VILLA BELCARO

PLATE 160. WEST SCREEN OF CORTILE AND OUTER COURT—VILLA BELCARO

PLATE 161. ENTRANCE THROUGH WEST SCREEN—VILLA BELCARO

PLATE 162. CORTILE FROM GATE IN WEST SCREEN—VILLA BELCARO

PLATE 163. DOOR DETAIL, WEST SCREEN OF CORTILE—VILLA BELCARO

PLATE 164. SOUTH FRONT AND CORTILE—VILLA BELCARO

PLATE 165. SOUTH SIDE OF CORTILE—VILLA BELCARO

PLATE 166. EAST SCREEN OF CORTILE—VILLA BELCARO

PLATE 167. DOOR DETAIL, SOUTH SIDE OF CORTILE—VILLA BELCARO

PLATE 168. WELL HEAD IN EAST SCREEN OF CORTILE—VILLA BELCARO

PLATE 169. SOUTH AND EAST FRONTS, AND WALLED GARDEN—VILLA BELCARO

PLATE 170. SOUTHWEST ANGLE—VILLA BELCARO

PLATE 171. EAST FRONT AND WALK ON BATTLEMENTS—VILLA BELCARO

PLATE 172. BELVEDERE AND WALK ON BATTLEMENTS—VILLA BELCARO

PLATE 173. CANNON BALLS AND TABLET IN WALL—VILLA BELCARO

VICOBELLO, NEAR SIENA

VICOBELLO, crowning a low hilltop over against Siena, to the southeast of the city, is a notable example of the sixteenth century Sienese villa and has retained its sixteenth century characteristics without irrelevant changes and additions of later date. Although the casino or dwelling is well worthy of the part it plays in the complete conception, it is the general composition considered in its entirety that fascinates the visitor and evokes unqualified admiration. Vicobello is ascribed to the design of Baldassare Peruzzi, and there is every reason to credit him as the creator of this surpassingly beautiful retreat, both on the grounds of visible evidence and also on the score of historic probability, for when the Chigi family were going to establish a new country residence it was more than likely that they would engage the services of one of the foremost architects of the day, especially when that same architect was so closely associated with Siena where he had already left numerous evidences of his skill.

After ascending the hill outside the walled enclosure of the villa, a short lane brings us to an arched entrance through the width of a long narrow building that contains the stables, coach-house, *cantina,* servants' quarters and other dependencies, and forms the eastern boundary of the oblong courtyard. To the north the courtyard is open and beyond its limits is an extensive park with broad avenues of ilex trees and shady walks. To the west the courtyard is bounded by the house, sundry minor buildings and the chapel, which is quite detached from the dwelling. To the south the boundary consists of a wall which separates the courtyard from the parterre.

In this plan we see that the house now consists of a single rectangular mass, the *cortile* or courtyard being kept altogether outside the limits of the dwelling proper and treated as the central connecting space about which the house and all the dependencies are grouped. This scheme of organisation, it will be observed, is in a general way similar to that which obtains at Belcaro, where the present arrangement is also Peruzzi's work.

To the west of the house and parterre are the different gardens (Plates 180–184) descending at various levels, according to the lie of the land. In studying Vicobello one cannot fail to be impressed by the continuity and coherence of the whole scheme, elements entirely lacking in some of the earlier villas where the arrangement is more or less fortuitous owing to successive stages of growth through the centuries. Vicobello, indeed, gives every evidence of having been designed as a complete whole. In this connexion, Mr. Platt's characterisation of many Italian villas is thoroughly apposite when he writes: "The evident harmony of arrangement between the house and surrounding landscape is what first strikes one in Italian landscape architecture—the design as an whole, including gardens, terraces, groves, and their necessary surroundings and embellishments, it being clear

that no one of these component parts was ever considered independently, the architect of the house being also the architect of the garden and the rest of the villa. The problem being to take a piece of land and make it habitable, the architect proceeded with the idea that not only was the house to be lived in, but that one still wished to be at home while out-of-doors; so that the garden was designed as another apartment, the terraces and groves still others, where one might walk about and find a place suitable to the hour of the day and feeling of the moment, and still be in that sacred portion of the globe dedicated to one's self."

The house or casino at Vicobello (Plates 178 and 179) is a striking example of beautiful and restrained composition. To one accustomed to the richly picturesque quality of the earlier villas, or the florid exuberance and imposing circumstance of many of the villas built during the Baroque age, the calm mien of Vicobello may at first seem a trifle austere and academic. But study its elevations for a little, and the study begets a sense of satisfying conviction. The just proportions and well considered balance in every particular ultimately exert that compelling force that only elegant and reasoned simplicity can achieve. The walls are coated with light stucco and all the details are wrought in the warm cream-coloured native limestone that closely resembles the Roman travertin but is of finer grain.

The two chief focal points of interest and charm in the courtyard are undoubtedly the well-head (Plate 175) beside the entrance archway, and the gateway (Plate 176) into the parterre. Beautiful as this gateway is in its every detail, and much as that beauty is enhanced by the rare mellowness of age, one becomes well-nigh oblivious of it all through the sheer dramatic force of the vista that awaits the gaze upon looking through the arch. Down a long box-bordered gravel walk, at the oposite end of the parterre, rises a stately tribune (Plate 177) sharply silhouetted against a background of deep green, spike-topped cypresses. With the westering sun illumining this spendid *tour de force*, one beholds a transcendent example of the working of that unerring dramatic instinct that guided the early Italian garden architects and gave a sparkling vitality to so much of their work.

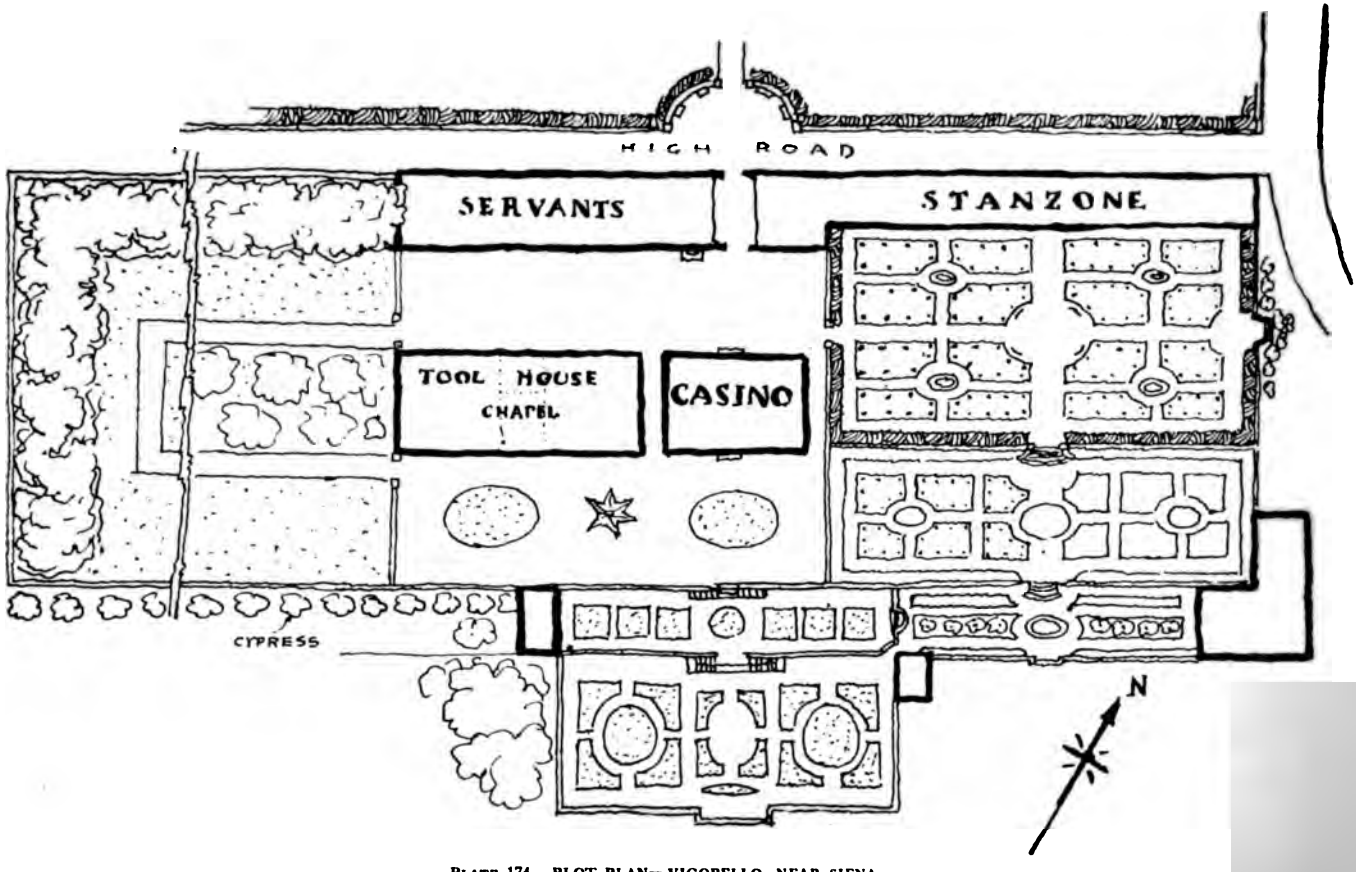


PLATE 174. PLOT PLAN—VICOBELLO, NEAR SIENA

PLATE 175. WELL HEAD IN CORTILE—VICOBELLO

PLATE 176. GATEWAY FROM CORTILE INTO PARTERRE—VICOBELLO

PLATE 175. WELL HEAD IN CORTILE—VICOBELLO

PLATE 176. GATEWAY FROM CORTILE INTO PARTERRE—VICOBELLO

PLATE 177. TERMINAL NICHE IN GARDEN—VICOBELLO

PLATE 178. SOUTH FRONT—VICOBELLO

PLATE 179. CHAPEL AND SOUTH FRONT—VICOBELLO

PLATE 180. BELVEDERE, LOWER GARDEN—VICOBELLO

PLATE 181. STEPS FROM PARTERRE TO LOWER GARDEN—VICOBELLO

PLATE 182. WALK IN LOWER GARDEN—VICOBELLO

PLATE 183. GARDEN STAIR WITH ESPALIERED TREES—VICOBELLO

PLATE 184. STAIR FROM TOWER GARDEN AT TERRACE—VICOBELLO

THE VILLA DEL ARCIVESCOVO, NEAR LUCCA

THE Villa del Arcivescovo, but a few miles outside of Lucca, an estate belonging to the Archbishopric of Lucca, is a spot to which the Archbishops may well have delighted to repair during the heat of summer or the golden days of the Tuscan autumn. It affords none of the thrills incident to a spectacular setting, as do many other Tuscan villas. It commands no broad outlook to fascinate the eye. There are none of the triumphs of garden planning to enhance the environment. There are no water courses, nor pools, nor fountains, such as other villas in the vicinity possess. There is only the fat farming country all about, dotted with the dwellings of the *contadini.* The house itself is small and unpretentious, and the sole mark of seigneurial state is the small *bosco* or park, a little distance to the east of the house, which you enter through a gateway with piers designed in a restrained Baroque manner (Plate 193). But, all the same, the place is instinct with the compelling charm of dignity and domestic repose, set against a well-ordered agricultural background, yet without any suggestion of bucolic rudeness. This air of refinement, despite the close proximity of all the farming operations, the reader has probably discovered by this time is one of the mysteries of the Tuscan villa.

The house itself is a piece of consciously architectural design (Plate 186) contrived by an architect who evidently had coherent views of composition. In this respect it marks a stage in the *cinquecento* evolution of villa planning. Comparison with many of the earlier villas shews that while they embodied endless architectural gems, their composition as complete organisations was often less studied and more fortuitous than was the case in the sixteenth century and subsequently.

The mass of the house is a compact, oblong rectangle—somewhat low in proportion to its length, as compared with earlier usage—broken on the west side by the projection and slightly greater height of the central pavilion (Plate 186). The presence of such a pavilion and the fact of there being only a ground floor, or *piano nobile,* with an attic storey above it are evidences that new and more academic influences were at work. The central doorway with its interrupted pediment (Plate 187), the double flight of balustraded steps, adorned with pebble and shell work, leading up to the entrance, and the late form of the windows on the western façade, all seem like a foreshadowing of the approaching Baroque influence. As the writer unfortunately does not know the detailed history of the Villa del Arcivescovo, it is impossible to state definitely whether or not the three features just alluded to may have been changed at a date subsequent to the original building of the house. It would have been quite in the natural order of things for the episcopal occupant of the time being to have added these embellishments when the unmistakably seventeenth century gateways

to the *podere* (Plate 192) and the park were constructed. All over Italy there was a veritable passion for doing that sort of thing during the Baroque age. Sad to relate, it was not always uniformly well done. On a point like this, however, it is unsafe to pontificate without having the actual historical data at hand, for it is quite possible to detect the germs of Baroque characterstics in the Duomo at Florence if one knows where to look for them.

The appearance of the east façade (Plates 188 and 189) is distinctly more in accord with earlier traditions. The window treatment and the cills supported on consoles (Plate 191) belong to the period when the house was built, and the arcading of the loggia (Plate 190) could not be mistaken for other than *cinquecento* work. The incorporation of the loggia within the lines of the mass in a thoroughly constructional manner is an example that might profitably be taken to heart by moderns who clamour loudly for verandahs (Plate 189). The twin towers, by their design and details, also proclaim the hand of a sixteenth century architect.

These two square towers (Plates 186 and 189) of Renaissance character with Classic *motifs* of low projection are remnants of an older tradition which the architect wisely retained. They give an acceptable touch of dignity and additional interest to the structure they adorn while, at the same time, they serve the highly utilitarian purpose of dovecotes.

Absolutely devoid of adventitious pretense as it is, the Villa del Arcivescovo nevertheless cannot fail to create a deep impression and one instinctively feels that a long search might well fail to reveal a composition of like size and character so fully invested with the elements of quiet elegance and gentle grace.

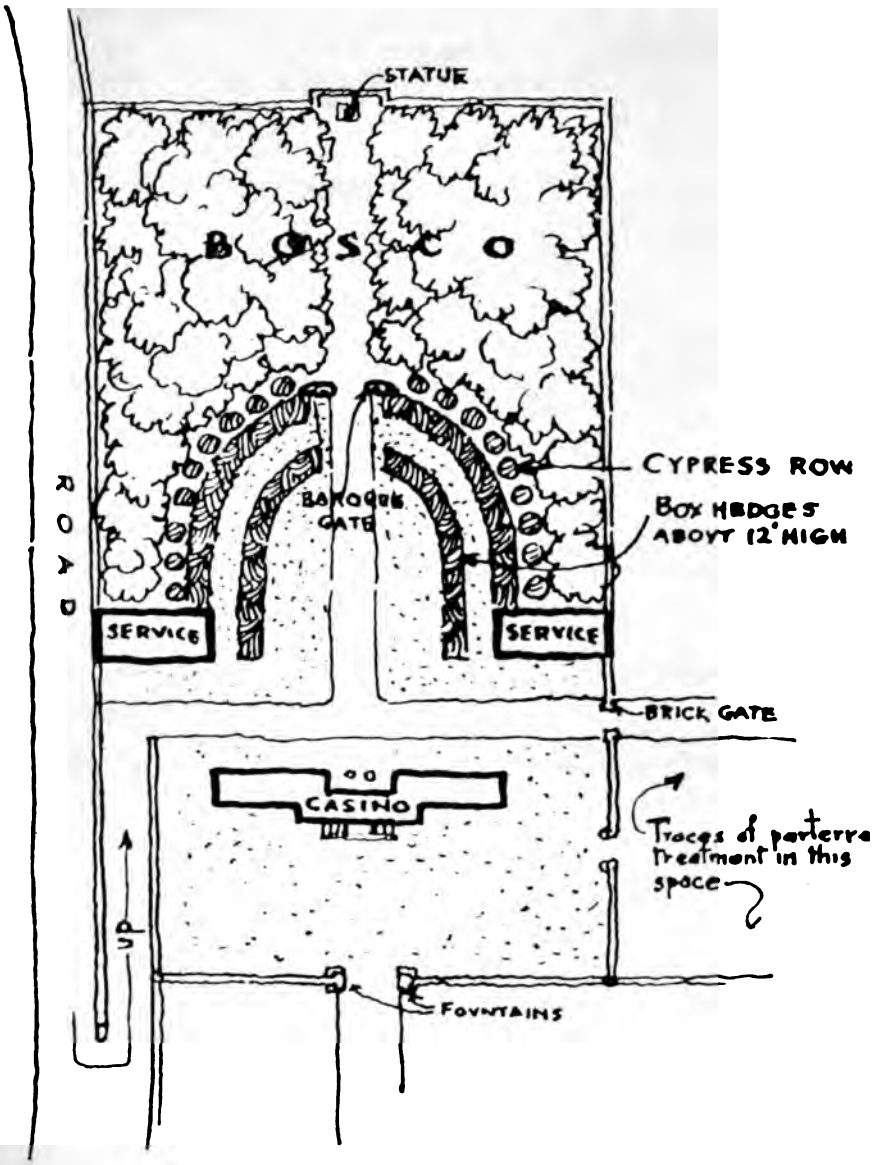


PLATE 185. PLOT PLAN—VILLA DEL ARCIVESCOVO, NEAR LUCCA

PLATE 186. WEST FRONT—VILLA DEL ARCIVESCOVO

PLATE 187. CENTRAL PAVILION, WEST FRONT—VILLA DEL ARCIVESCOVO

PLATE 188. EAST FRONT—VILLA DEL ARCIVESCOVO

PLATE 189. LOGGIA, EAST FRONT—VILLA DEL ARCIVESCOVO

PLATE 191. DETAIL OF WINDOWS—VILLA DEL ARCIVESCOVO

PLATE 190. DETAILS OF LOGGIA, EAST FRONT—VILLA DEL ARCIVESCOVO

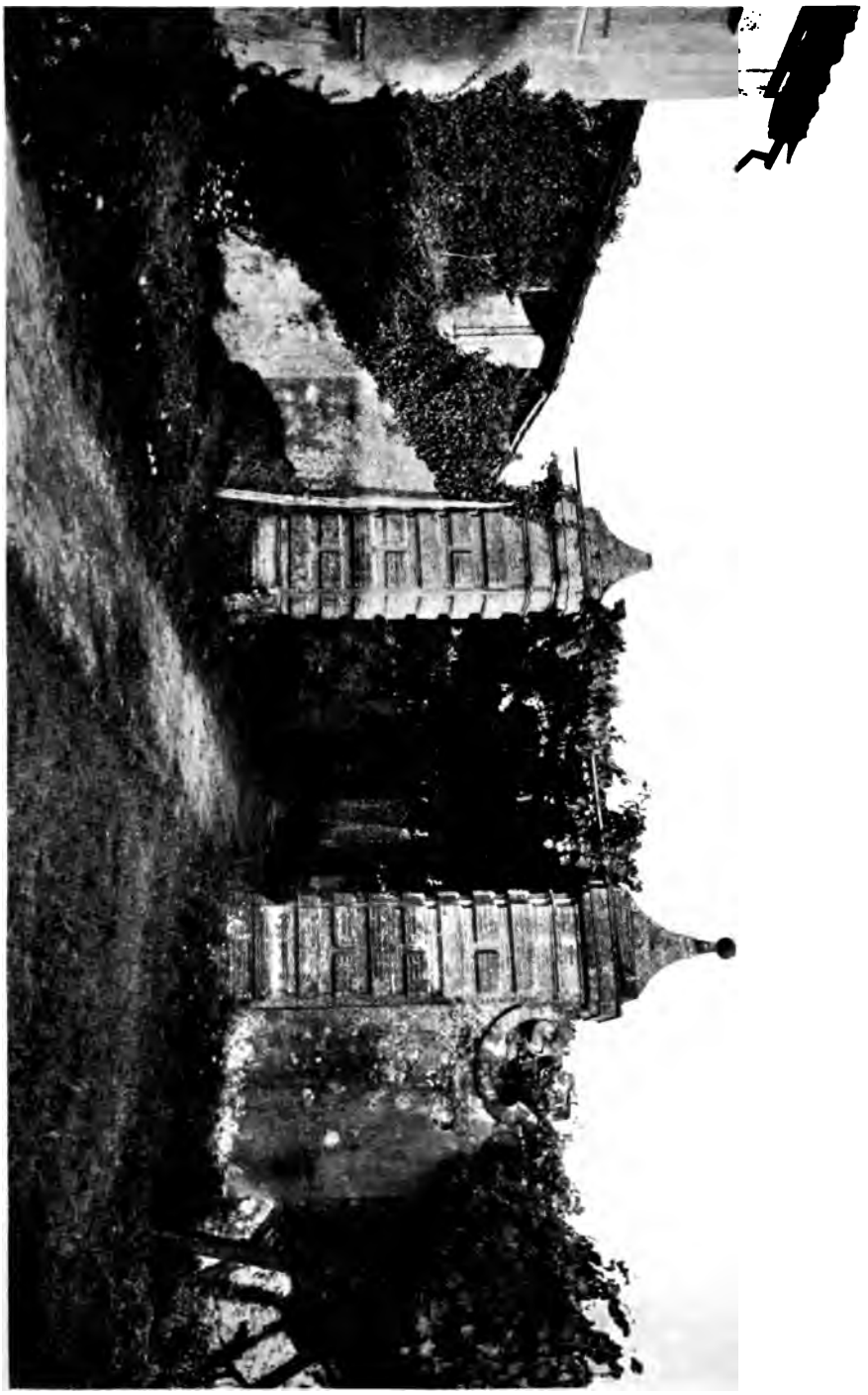


PLATE 192. GATEWAY INTO PODERE—VILLA DEL ARCIVESCOVO

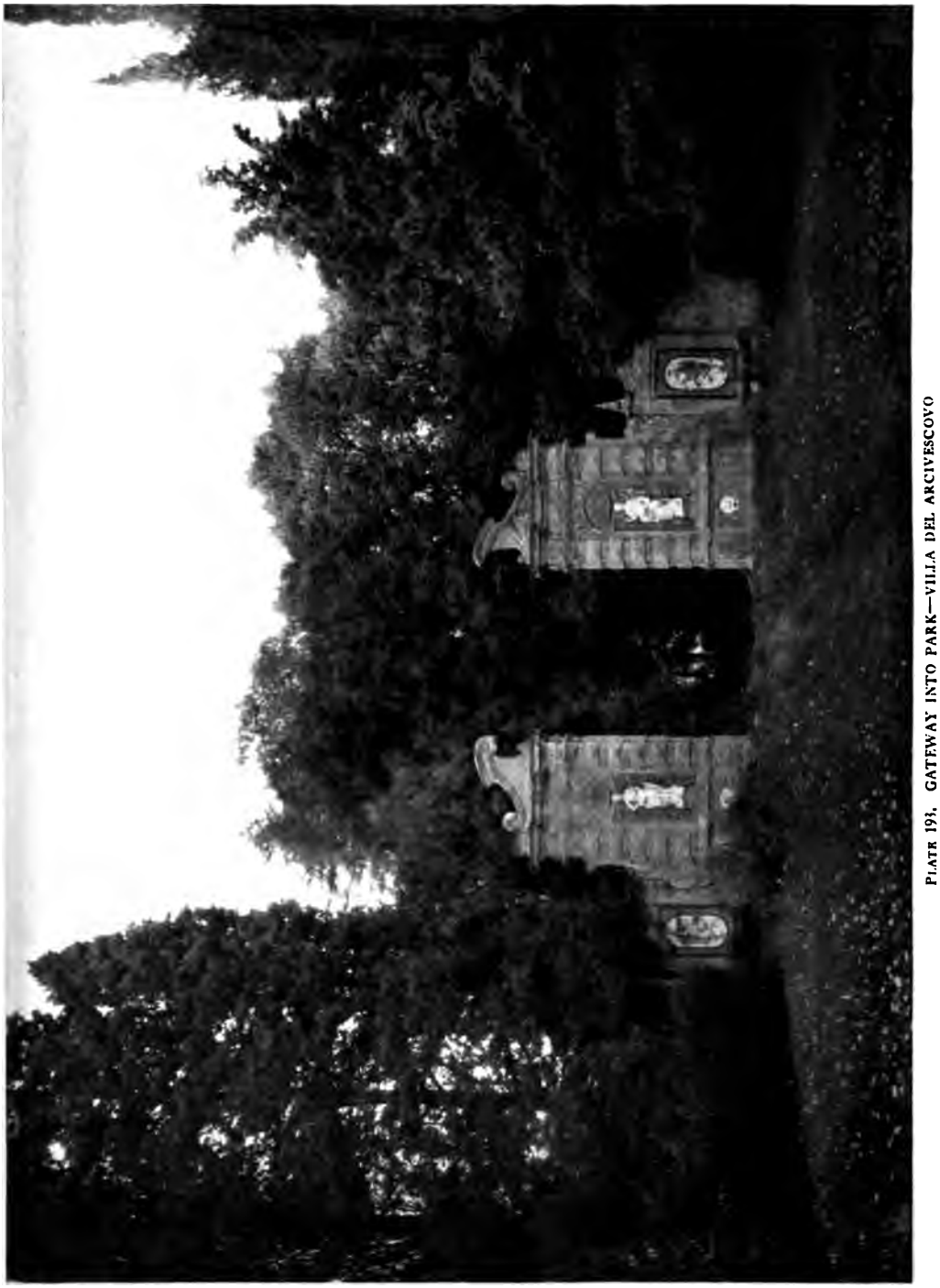


PLATE 191. GATEWAY INTO PARK—VILLA DEL ARCIVESCOVO

POGGIO TORSELLI, NEAR SAN CASCIANO, VAL DI PESA

Poggio Torselli has been well described in the words of a local Tuscan antiquarian as the "queen of all the villas" round about the village of Casavecchia, near San Casciano. Built in the seventeenth century, by a branch of the Corsini family it exemplifies the less flamboyant phase of "the Baroque taste" and its plan is characteristic of the later form of villa. That is to say, there is a main rectangular compact block without a *cortile,* and the central mass is flanked by wings, behind which, at right angles to the house itself, extend the dependencies (Plate 194).

The approach is through a long, straight *viale* of tall cypresses (Plate 195), which is quite as fine in its way as anything to be seen at the Villa D'Este. This imposing avenue which can be distinguished for miles about the countryside, makes a fitting introduction to the bold, symmetrical aspect of the entrance front of the house (Plate 196). The grey-brown of the stuccoed walls is relieved by the deeper brown of the pilasters, the cornice and the geometrical panelling which occurs on the fronts of the flanking wings (Plates 197 and 198). The door and window trims are of *pietra serena* and the shutters are painted a light green in the usual manner.

Inside the house one of the features of most notable interest is the staircase (Plate 199), which is wrought entirely in the grey *pietra serena* of the region, and is indicative of the period when the domestic staircase was becoming an object of considerable architectural elaboration.

Another striking interior feature is the lofty *salone*—within the three central bays of the southeast or garden front—whose height extends through both the ground and mezzanine storeys (Plates 200 and 201). Here the ceiling and walls are embellished with stucco ornament in bold relief, in the manner of the period, a manner upon which special comment was made in the introductory chapters.

Altogether, the design of the whole establishment and the method of its interior disposition faithfully reflect the ample mode of life pursued in those brave days of pomp and ceremony when the taste for "Spanish magnificence" had thoroughly supplanted the old Tuscan standards of frugality and simple living. Without concurring altogether in the lamentations of the noble Senator Vincenzio Giraldi, written some years earlier anent the follies and frailties of the men and women of his day, we may gratefully turn to his letters for a lively bit of colour in helping us to visualise the life of the time, the resplendent appointments of the houses, and the clothing of the actors in this fascinating scene. It is pleasant, too, in connexion with Poggio Torselli, to think of the progress of Pope Pius VII and of his stopping here to spend the night while on his way to crown Napoleon. The Holy Father came attended by his cardinals and

THE VILLA DEL ARCIVESCOVO, NEAR LUCCA

THE Villa del Arcivescovo, but a few miles outside of Lucca, an estate belonging to the Archbishopric of Lucca, is a spot to which the Archbishops may well have delighted to repair during the heat of summer or the golden days of the Tuscan autumn. It affords none of the thrills incident to a spectacular setting, as do many other Tuscan villas. It commands no broad outlook to fascinate the eye. There are none of the triumphs of garden planning to enhance the environment. There are no water courses, nor pools, nor fountains, such as other villas in the vicinity possess. There is only the fat farming country all about, dotted with the dwellings of the *contadini.* The house itself is small and unpretentious, and the sole mark of seigneurial state is the small *bosco* or park, a little distance to the east of the house, which you enter through a gateway with piers designed in a restrained Baroque manner (Plate 193). But, all the same, the place is instinct with the compelling charm of dignity and domestic repose, set against a well-ordered agricultural background, yet without any suggestion of bucolic rudeness. This air of refinement, despite the close proximity of all the farming operations, the reader has probably discovered by this time is one of the mysteries of the Tuscan villa.

The house itself is a piece of consciously architectural design (Plate 186) contrived by an architect who evidently had coherent views of composition. In this respect it marks a stage in the *cinquecento* evolution of villa planning. Comparison with many of the earlier villas shews that while they embodied endless architectural gems, their composition as complete organisations was often less studied and more fortuitous than was the case in the sixteenth century and subsequently.

The mass of the house is a compact, oblong rectangle—somewhat low in proportion to its length, as compared with earlier usage—broken on the west side by the projection and slightly greater height of the central pavilion (Plate 186). The presence of such a pavilion and the fact of there being only a ground floor, or *piano nobile,* with an attic storey above it are evidences that new and more academic influences were at work. The central doorway with its interrupted pediment (Plate 187), the double flight of balustraded steps, adorned with pebble and shell work, leading up to the entrance, and the late form of the windows on the western façade, all seem like a foreshadowing of the approaching Baroque influence. As the writer unfortunately does not know the detailed history of the Villa del Arcivescovo, it is impossible to state definitely whether or not the three features just alluded to may have been changed at a date subsequent to the original building of the house. It would have been quite in the natural order of things for the episcopal occupant of the time being to have added these embellishments when the unmistakably seventeenth century gateways

to the *podere* (Plate 192) and the park were constructed. All over Italy there was a veritable passion for doing that sort of thing during the Baroque age. Sad to relate, it was not always uniformly well done. On a point like this, however, it is unsafe to pontificate without having the actual historical data at hand, for it is quite possible to detect the germs of Baroque characterstics in the Duomo at Florence if one knows where to look for them.

The appearance of the east façade (Plates 188 and 189) is distinctly more in accord with earlier traditions. The window treatment and the cills supported on consoles (Plate 191) belong to the period when the house was built, and the arcading of the loggia (Plate 190) could not be mistaken for other than *cinquecento* work. The incorporation of the loggia within the lines of the mass in a thoroughly constructional manner is an example that might profitably be taken to heart by moderns who clamour loudly for verandahs (Plate 189). The twin towers, by their design and details, also proclaim the hand of a sixteenth century architect.

These two square towers (Plates 186 and 189) of Renaissance character with Classic *motifs* of low projection are remnants of an older tradition which the architect wisely retained. They give an acceptable touch of dignity and additional interest to the structure they adorn while, at the same time, they serve the highly utilitarian purpose of dovecotes.

Absolutely devoid of adventitious pretense as it is, the Villa del Arcivescovo nevertheless cannot fail to create a deep impression and one instinctively feels that a long search might well fail to reveal a composition of like size and character so fully invested with the elements of quiet elegance and gentle grace.

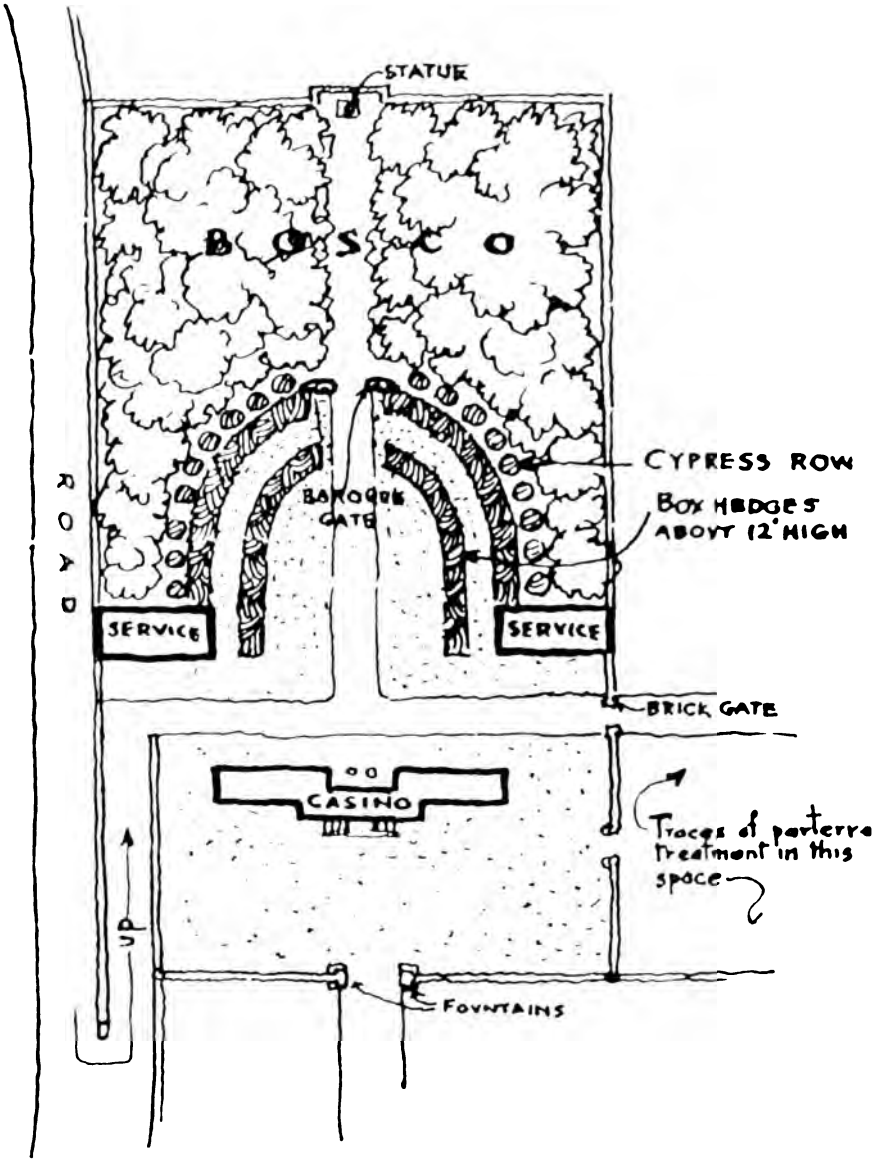


PLATE 185. PLOT PLAN—VILLA DEL ARCIVESCOVO, NEAR LUCCA

PLATE 186. WEST FRONT—VILLA DEL ARCIVESCOVO

PLATE 187. CENTRAL PAVILION, WEST FRONT—VILLA DEL ARCIVESCOVO

PLATE 188. EAST FRONT—VILLA DEL ARCIVESCOVO

PLATE 189. LOGGIA, EAST FRONT—VILLA DEL ARCIVESCOVO

PLATE 191. DETAIL OF WINDOWS—VILLA DEL ARCIVESCOVO

PLATE 190. DETAILS OF LOGGIA. EAST FRONT—VILLA DEL ARCIVESCOVO

PLATE 192. GATEWAY INTO PODERE—VILLA DEL ARCIVESCOVO

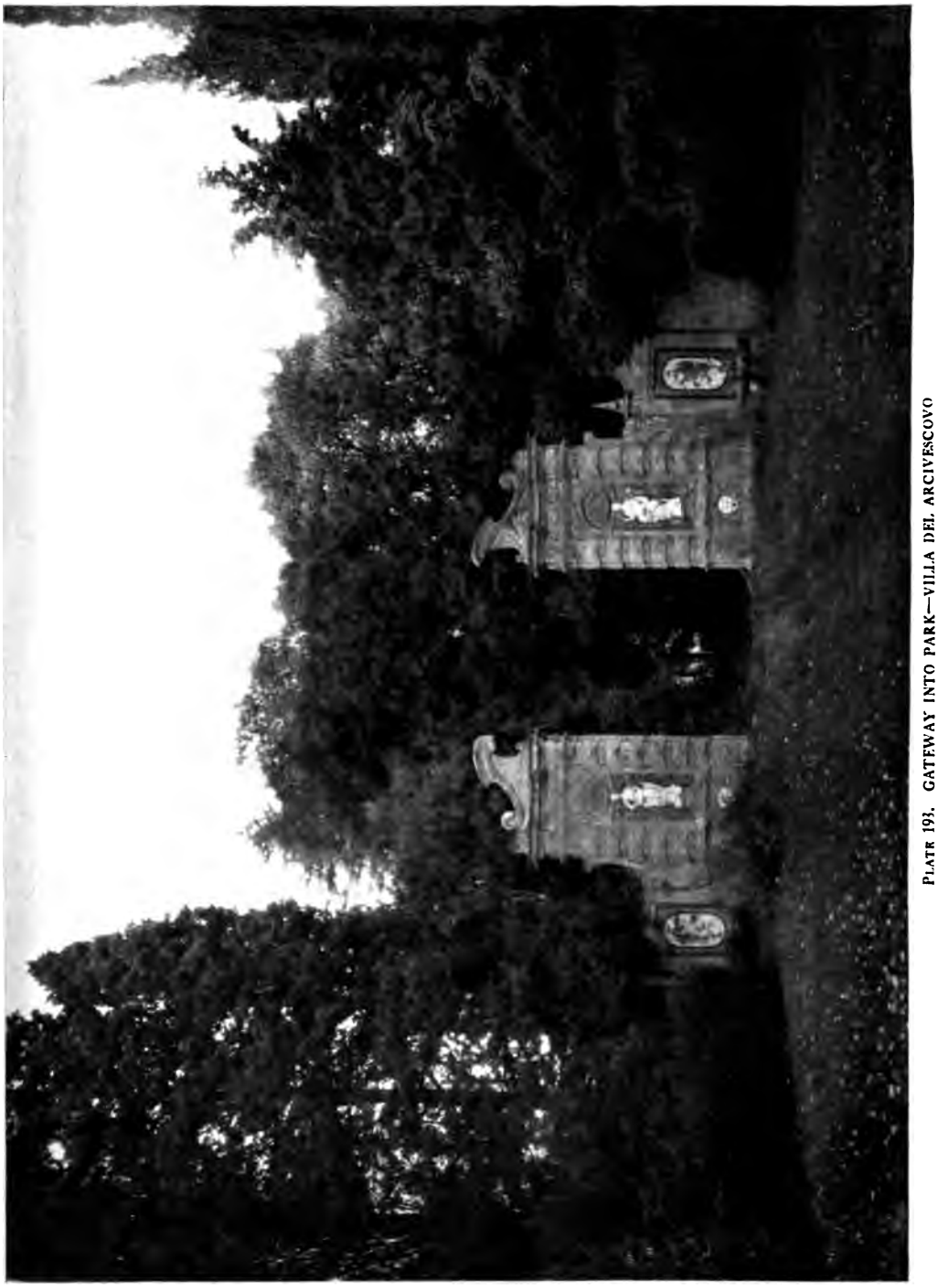


PLATE 193. GATEWAY INTO PARK—VILLA DEL ARCIVESCOVO

POGGIO TORSELLI, NEAR SAN CASCIANO, VAL DI PESA

Poggio Torselli has been well described in the words of a local Tuscan antiquarian as the "queen of all the villas" round about the village of Casavecchia, near San Casciano. Built in the seventeenth century, by a branch of the Corsini family it exemplifies the less flamboyant phase of "the Baroque taste" and its plan is characteristic of the later form of villa. That is to say, there is a main rectangular compact block without a *cortile,* and the central mass is flanked by wings, behind which, at right angles to the house itself, extend the dependencies (Plate 194).

The approach is through a long, straight *viale* of tall cypresses (Plate 195), which is quite as fine in its way as anything to be seen at the Villa D'Este. This imposing avenue which can be distinguished for miles about the countryside, makes a fitting introduction to the bold, symmetrical aspect of the entrance front of the house (Plate 196). The grey-brown of the stuccoed walls is relieved by the deeper brown of the pilasters, the cornice and the geometrical panelling which occurs on the fronts of the flanking wings (Plates 197 and 198). The door and window trims are of *pietra serena* and the shutters are painted a light green in the usual manner.

Inside the house one of the features of most notable interest is the staircase (Plate 199), which is wrought entirely in the grey *pietra serena* of the region, and is indicative of the period when the domestic staircase was becoming an object of considerable architectural elaboration.

Another striking interior feature is the lofty *salone*—within the three central bays of the southeast or garden front—whose height extends through both the ground and mezzanine storeys (Plates 200 and 201). Here the ceiling and walls are embellished with stucco ornament in bold relief, in the manner of the period, a manner upon which special comment was made in the introductory chapters.

Altogether, the design of the whole establishment and the method of its interior disposition faithfully reflect the ample mode of life pursued in those brave days of pomp and ceremony when the taste for "Spanish magnificence" had thoroughly supplanted the old Tuscan standards of frugality and simple living. Without concurring altogether in the lamentations of the noble Senator Vincenzio Giraldi, written some years earlier anent the follies and frailties of the men and women of his day, we may gratefully turn to his letters for a lively bit of colour in helping us to visualise the life of the time, the resplendent appointments of the houses, and the clothing of the actors in this fascinating scene. It is pleasant, too, in connexion with Poggio Torselli, to think of the progress of Pope Pius VII and of his stopping here to spend the night while on his way to crown Napoleon. The Holy Father came attended by his cardinals and

when he departed on the morrow he left his little ermine-lined velvet cape as a memento of his visit. This memorial still hangs upon the wall of the room in which His Holiness slept, and the little placards with the names of the cardinals are still attached to the doors of the rooms they occupied.

In the north wing is the family chapel (Plate 197), while, corresponding to it, the south wing (Plate 198) gives access to the stables and coach house. Back of the chapel and stables, the buildings flanking the garden accommodate the lemon house (Plate 204), accessory gardening provisions, and housing for the domestic servants and farm labourers.

The garden, which is symmetrically planned, is enclosed and sheltered on three sides by the main body of the house and by the long, projecting dependencies. It is open to the southeast and on this fourth side is bounded by only a low wall, on the other side of which the ground falls sharply away, through olive orchards and vineyards, to the valley below. As the plans shew, the dependencies are splayed outward slightly so that the garden is a trifle broader at the low boundary wall than it is directly in front of the house. This is intentional, and is one of those subtleties of Baroque architecture that the seventeenth century architects made frequent use of.

About seventy years ago the garden was partially remodelled to make it coincide more nearly with the taste for the *giardino inglese* then prevalent. The northeast corner, however, was fortunately not very much disturbed and this will supply the clue for a restoration that will probably take place. The broad terrace (Plate 206), upon which the *salone* opens, is gravelled. The beds down the middle of the terrace are composed of collections of potted plants and can be removed at will.

A careful examination of the entire composition—the approach, the house with its subsidiary buildings, and the gardens—leaves one deeply impressed with a satisfying sense of completeness.

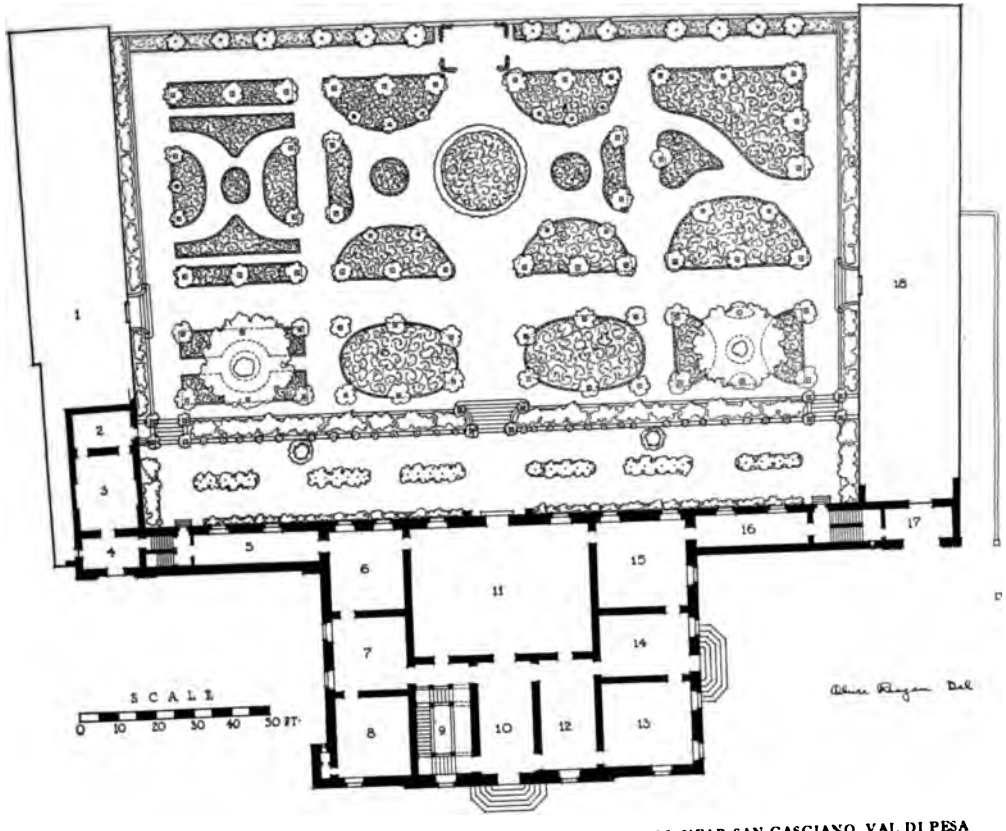


PLATE 194. GROUND FLOOR AND GARDEN PLANS—POGGIO TORSELLI, NEAR SAN CASCIANO, VAL DI PESA

PLATE 195. APPROACH THROUGH CYPRESS VIALE—POGGIO TORSELLI

PLATE 196. NORTH FRONT—POGGIO TORSELLI

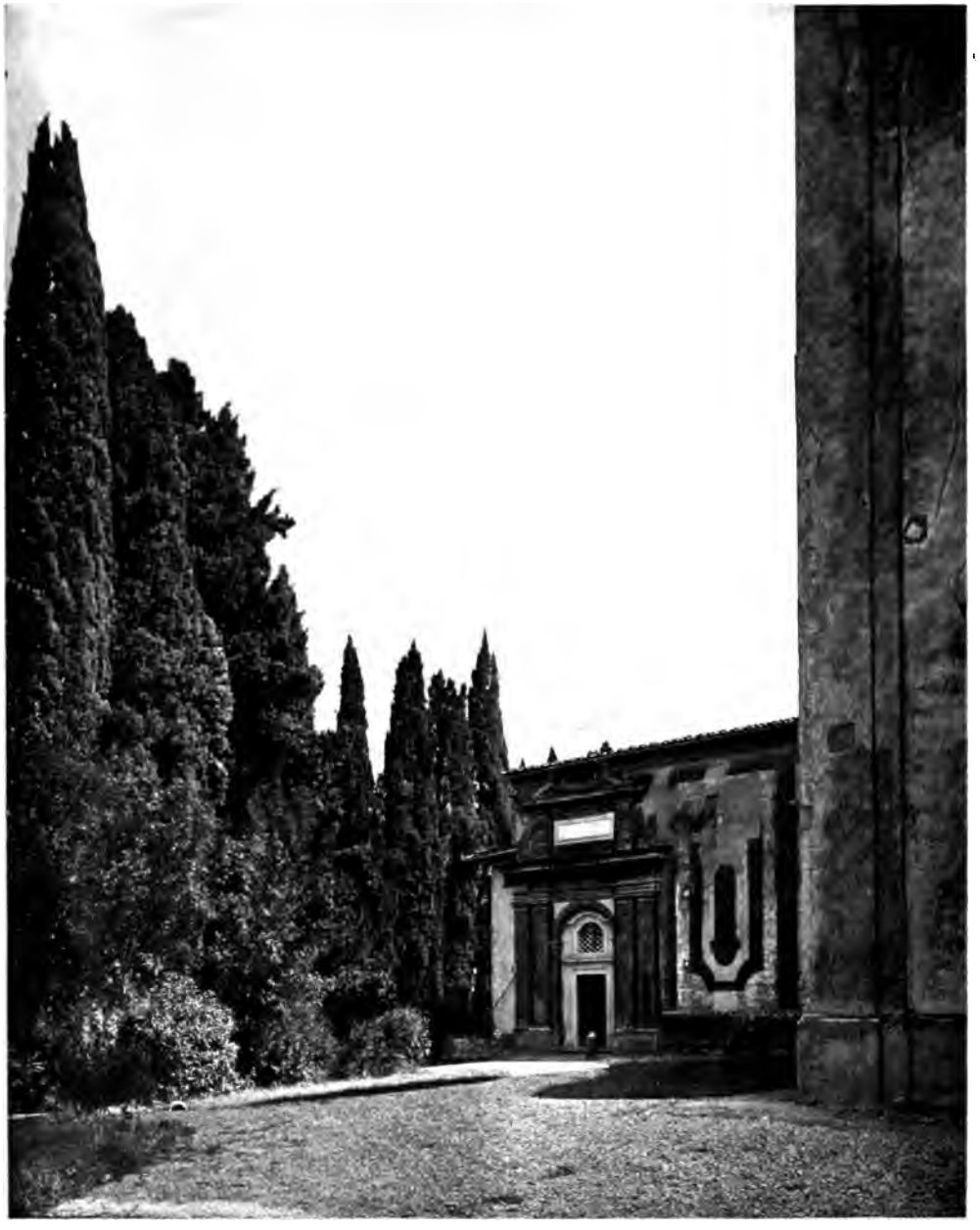


PLATE 197. CHAPEL ENTRANCE, EAST WING—POGGIO TORSELLI

PLATE 198. COACH HOUSE ENTRANCE, WEST WING—POGGIO TORSELLI

PLATE 199. STAIRCASE—POGGIO TORSELLI

PLATE 200. SALONE—POGGIO TORSELLI

PLATE 201. SALONE—POGGIO TORSELLI

PLATE 202. SOUTHEAST FRONT AND TERRACE, FROM GARDEN—POGGIO TORSELLI

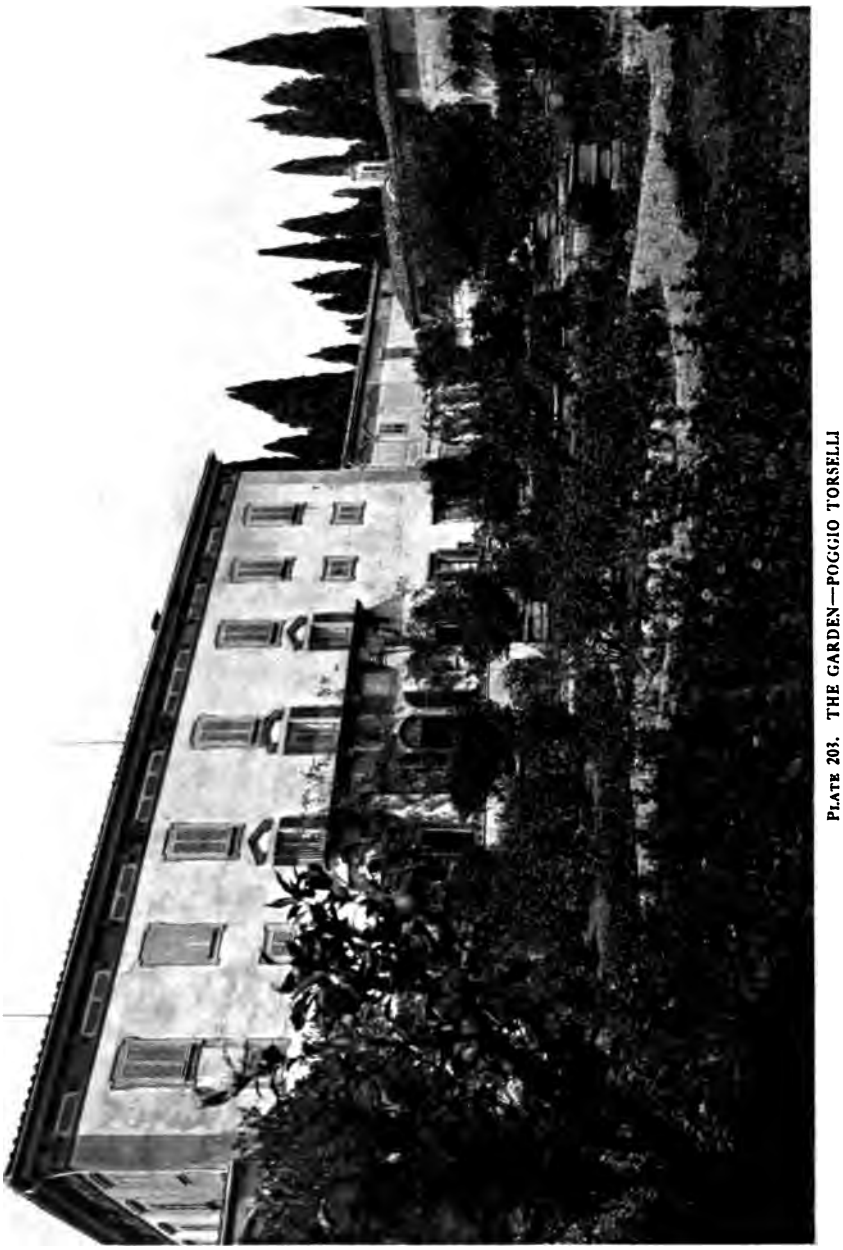


PLATE 203. THE GARDEN—POGGIO TORSELLI

PLATE 204. CROSS ALLEY IN GARDEN—POGGIO TORSELLI

PLATE 205. STEPS TO TERRACE AND SOUTH DOOR—POGGIO TORSELLI

PLATE 206. THE TERRACE—POGGIO TORSELLI

LA PIETRA, IL PELLEGRINO, VIA BOLOGNESE, NEAR FLORENCE

LA PIETRA, on the Via Bolognese, to the north of Florence, has presented to the world since 1690 an imposing and dignified Baroque exterior. Prior to that date it was a typical villa of the early Renaissance. Fortunately, notwithstanding the dominating Baroque accretions, much of the early fifteenth century work remains intact and is perfectly discernible after a little careful examination, so that the structure is, in a way, an architectural palimpsest.

The Sassetti family owned the villa in the fifteenth century, a fact attested by their arms carved on many of the corbels (Plates 224 and 225) within the house. Later it passed into the possession of the Capponi family, and, in 1690, Cardinal Capponi made the changes alluded to. He it was who built the lodges (Plate 208) at the gate, from which a long *viale* (Plate 209) of cypresses leads to the northwest (Plates 210–212) front of the villa, the central portion of which was raised to accommodate a lofty ball-room (Plate 226) for his Eminence and also to accord with the prevailing notions of symmetrical composition. At the same time the walled parterre or flower garden, to the northeast of the house (Plates 220 and 221), was constructed or, at least, enlarged and ornamented in the taste of the period.

One interesting instance of the way in which Cardinal Capponi's architect merely overlaid much of the pre-existing work without obliterating it is seen in the doorway of the southeast or garden front (Plates 213 and 214) where, upon the *quattrocento* lintol a Baroque pediment has been imposed, leaving the earlier setting quite undisturbed. The ceiling of the *salone* (Plate 223) affords another instance of the same sort of skin-deep remodelling, where bold plaster relief decorations with strapwork scrolls and medallions were applied without at all changing the ancient lunette vaulting of the structure.

The seventeenth century episode of embellishment did not at all affect the plan of the house, which remained an hollow square built about a central *cortile*, and it was not until a recent date that the *cortile* was roofed over with a skylight and a circular staircase installed therein (Plate 222).

The stuccoed walls of the exterior are of a brownish-grey colour, the shutters are light green, and the stone trims of the doors and windows are of a brown-toned *pietra serena*.

The ancient garden lay-out, upon descending levels of the southeast slope, was unfortunately swept away when the passion for the *giardino inglese* was abroad in the land. Luckily, however, enough traces of the former arrangement remained so that it was possible to reconstruct the erstwhile plan with considerable accuracy, and according to this plan the gardens have been restored in a successful and gratifying manner (Plates 216–219).

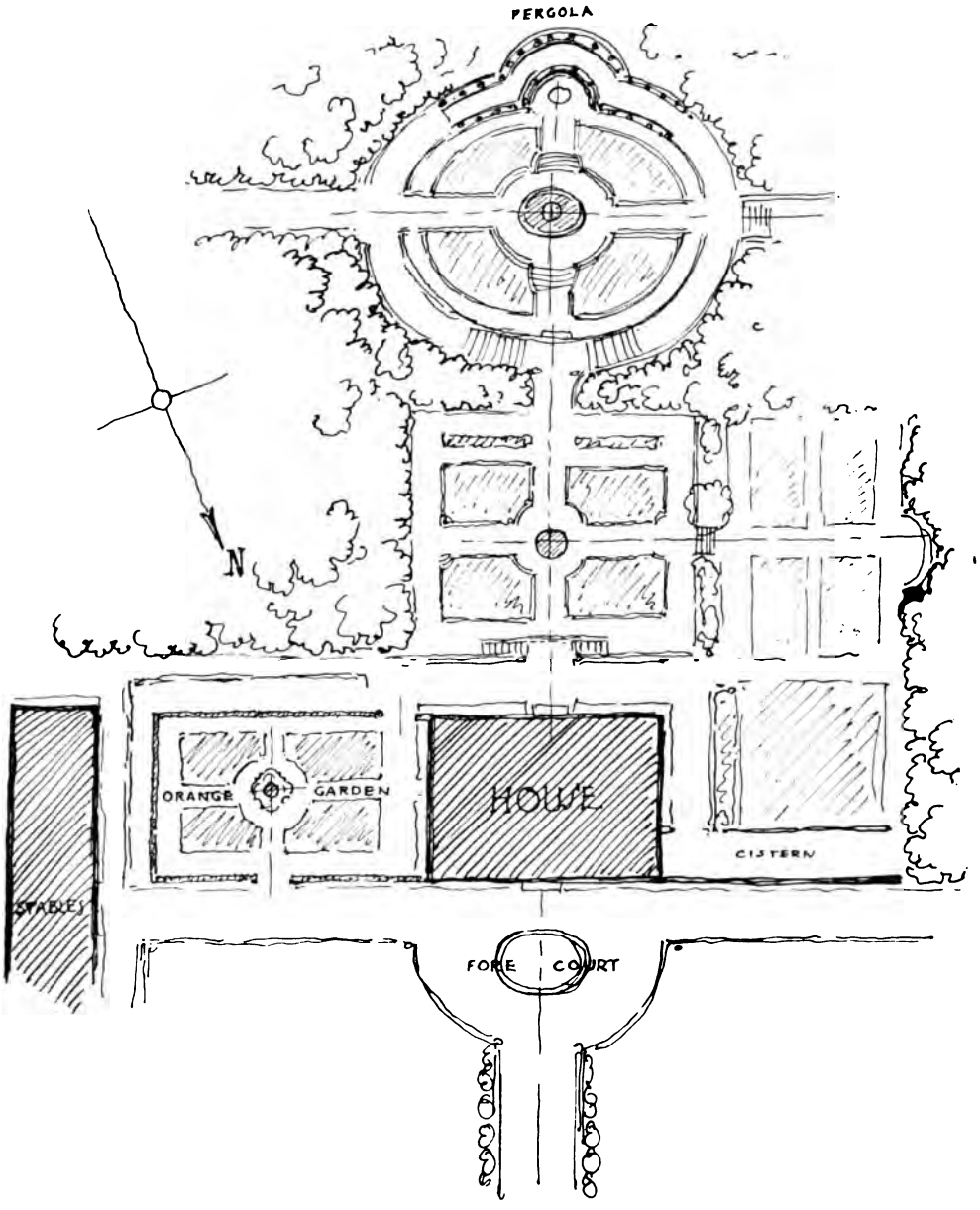


PLATE 207. PLOT PLAN OF LA PIETRA IL PELLEGRINO, NEAR FLORENCE

PLATE 209. THE VIALE—LA PIETRA

PLATE 208. THE GATE LODGES—LA PIETRA

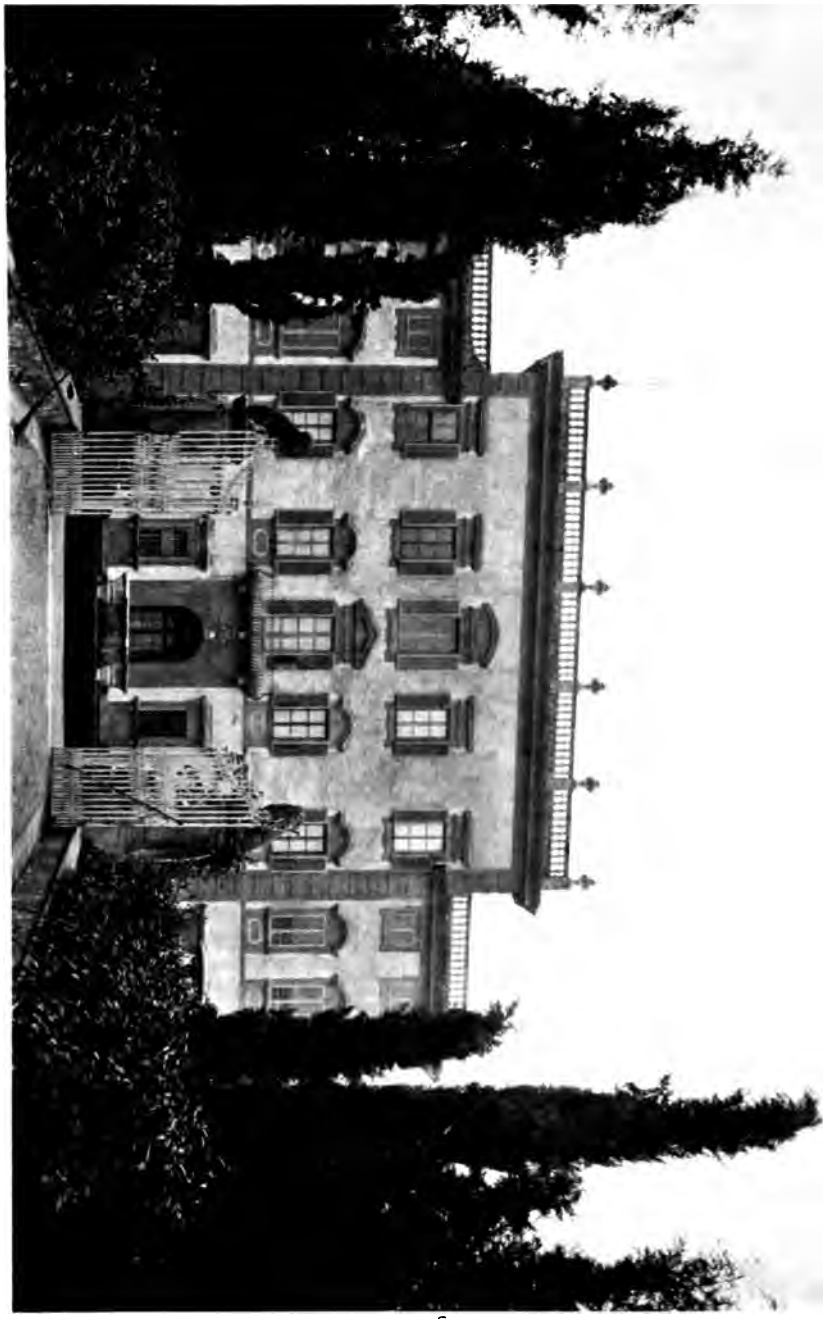


PLATE 210. NORTHWEST FRONT—LA PIETRA

PLATE 211. NORTHWEST FRONT AND GARDEN WALL—LA PIETRA

PLATE 212. PORTONE—LA PIETRA

PLATE 213. SOUTHEAST FRONT FROM GARDEN—LA PIETRA

PLATE 214. SOUTHEAST FRONT—LA PIETRA

PLATE 215. SOUTHEAST FRONT AND TERRACE—LA PIETRA

PLATE 216. SOUTHEAST FRONT FROM LOWER GARDEN—LA PIETRA

PLATE 217. LOWER GARDEN FROM TERRACE—LA PIETRA

PLATE 218. SOUTHEAST FRONT FROM PARTERRE—LA PIETRA

PLATE 219. STEPS IN GARDEN—LA PIETRA

PLATE 220. MIDDLE GATE, WALLED GARDEN—LA PEITRA

PLATE 221. WEST GATE, WALLED GARDEN—LA PIETRA

PLATE 222. STAIRCASE—LA PIETRA

PLATE 223. SALONE—LA PIETRA

PLATE 224. DINING ROOM—LA PIETRA

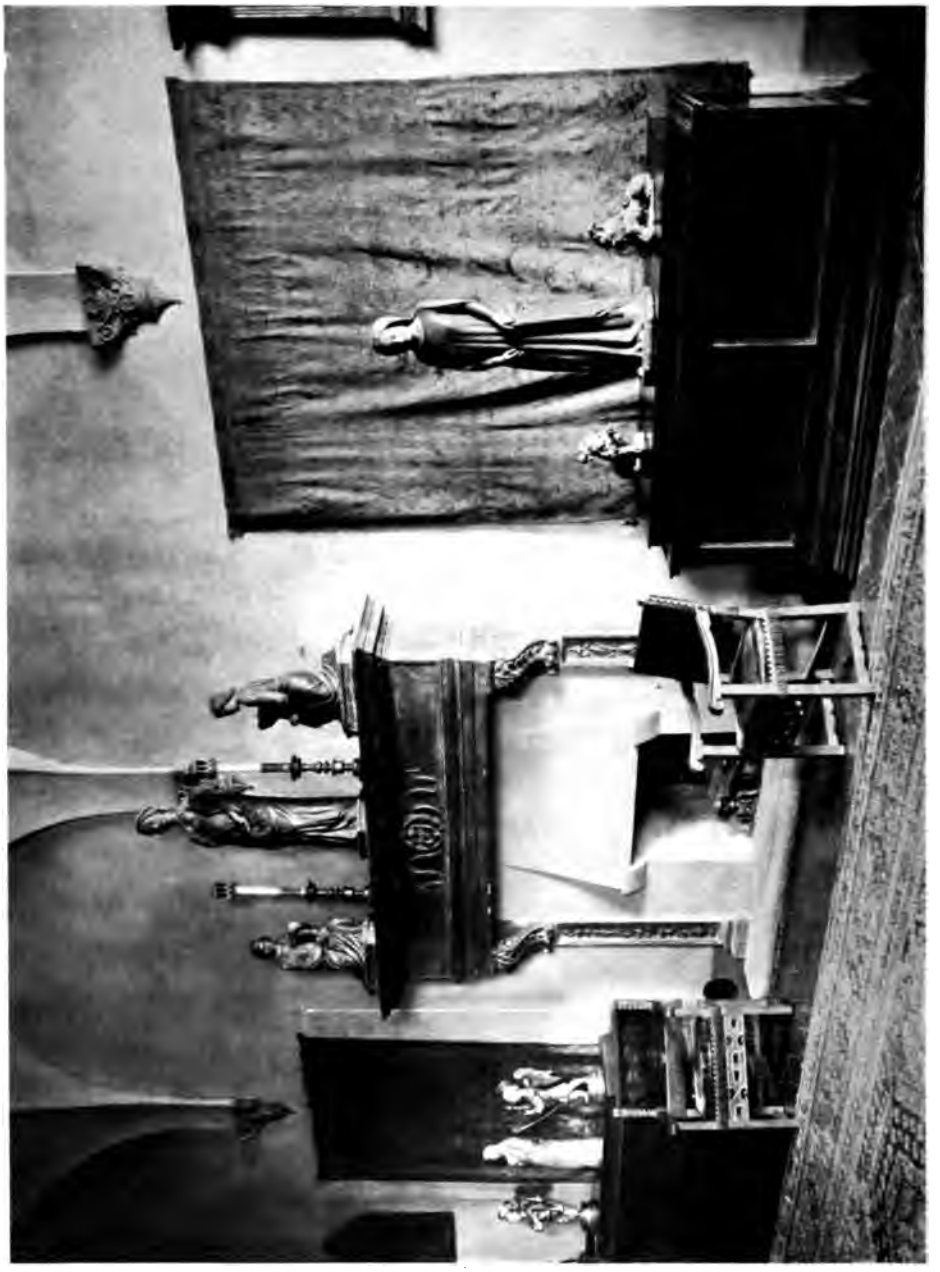


PLATE 225. FIREPLACE IN DINING ROOM—LA PIETRA

PLATE 226. FIREPLACE IN BALL ROOM—LA PIETRA

THE VILLA PALMIERI SAN DOMENICO NEAR FLORENCE

"WITH a milde, majesticke, and gentle pace, the Queene rode on, being followed by the other Ladies, and the three young Gentlemen, taking their way towards the West; conducted by the musicall notes of sweete singing Nightingales, and infinite other pretty Birds beside, riding in a tract not much frequented, but richly abounding with faire hearbes and flowres, which by reason of the Sunnes high mounting, beganne to open their bosome, and fill the fresh Ayre with their odorifferous perfumes. Before they had travelled two small miles distance, all of them pleasantly conversing together; they arrived at another goodly Palace, which being somewhat mounted above the plaine, was seated on the side of a little rising hill.

When they were entred thereinto, and had seene the great Hall, the Parlours, and beautifull Chambers, every one so stupendiously furnished, withall convenient commodities to them belonging, and nothing wanting, that could be desired; they highly commended it, reputing the Lord thereof for a most worthy man, that had adorned it in such Princely manner. Afterward, being descended lower, and noting the most spacious and pleasant Court, the Sellars stored with the choysest Wines, and delicate Springs of waters everywhere running, their prayses then exceeded more and more. And being weary with beholding such variety of pleasures, they sate downe in a faire Gallery, which tooke the view of the whole Court, it being round engirt with trees and flowres, whereof the season then yeelded great plenty. And then came the discreete Master of the Household, with divers servants attending on him, presenting them with Comfits, and other Banquetting, as also very singular Wines, to serve in stead of a breakefast.

Having thus reposed themselves a while, a Garden gate was set open to them, coasting on one side of the Pallace, and round enclosed with high mounted walles. Whereinto when they were entred, they found it to be a most beautifull Garden, stored with all varieties that possibly could be devised; and therefore they observed it the more respectively. The walkes and allyes were long and spacious, yet directly straite as an arrow, environed with spreading vines, whereon the grapes hung in copious clusters; which being come to their full ripenesse, gave so rare a smel throughout the Garden, with other sweete savours intermixed among, that they supposed to feele the fresh spiceries of the East.

It would require large length of time, to describe all the rarities of this place, deserving much more to be commended, then my best faculties will affoord me. In the middest of the Garden, was a square plot, after the resemblance of a Meadow, flourishing with high grasse, hearbes, and plants, beside a thousand diversities of flowres, even as if by the Art of painting they had beene there deputed. Round was it circled with very verdant Orenge and Cedar Trees, their branches plentiously stored with fruit both old and new, as also the flowres growing freshly among them, yeelding not onely a rare aspect to the eye, but also a delicate savour to the smell.

In the middest of this Meadow, stood a Fountaine of white Marble, whereon was engraven most admirable workemanhsip, and within it (I know not whether by a naturall veine, or artificiall) flowing from a figure, standing on a Collumne in the midst of the fountaine, such aboundance of water, and so mounting up towards the Skies, that it was a

wonder to behold. For after the high ascent, it fell downe againe into the wombe of the Fountaine, with such a noyse and pleasing murmure, as the streame that glideth from a mill. When the receptacle of the Fountaine did over-flow the bounds, it streamed along the Meadow, by secret passages and chanels, very faire and artificially made, returning againe into every part of the Meadow, by the like wayes of cunning conveighance, which allowed it full course into the Garden, running swiftly thence down towards the plaine; but before it came thether, the very swift current of the streame, did drive two goodly Milles, which brought in great benefit to the Lord of the soile.

The sight of this Garden, the goodly grafts, plants, trees, hearbes, frutages, and flowres, the Springs, Fountaines, and pretty rivolets streaming from it, so highly pleased the Ladies and Gentlemen, that among other infinite commendations, they spared not to say: if any Paradise remayned on the earth to be seene, it could not possibly be in any other place, but onely was contained within the compasse of this Garden."

Introduction to the Third Day of Boccaccio's Decameron; Anonymously done into English in 1625.

Such was Boccaccio's description of the Villa Palmieri in the summer of 1348. Its general tenour might serve equally well for an account of the villa at the present day. So far as explicit details are concerned, however, and the exact relation of one part of the gardens to another, we should be very much at sea, for we know that in 1691, or shortly after that date, Palmiero Palmieri completely transformed the appearance of the place.

The oldest part of the house there is reason to believe was built in 1259. At an early date it was owned by the Fini. Later it passed into the possession of the Solosmei who extended the buildings in 1350. In 1454 Matteo di Marco Palmieri bought it and from him it took the name it now bears, a name that supplanted the older names of Schifanoia and Fonte de' Tre Visi. Matteo Palmieri built the loggia in 1469. In 1630, when a plague was devastating Florence, the Villa Palmieri was used as a lazaretto and was not again occupied as a residence until the latter part of the century when Palmiero Palmieri returned to live there. Between 1691 and 1697 Palmiero Palmieri enlarged the house and gave it its present form, making it appear, when seen superficially, to be a Baroque work of the seventeenth century. He it was who built the great south terrace (Plate 235), overlooking the gardens, and the chapel which is a curious combination of Renaissance form and Baroque detail (Plate 234).

The old road to Fiesole used to pass under the south terrace and it was the custom of the Brethren of the Misericordia, of the two confraternities of Florence and Fiesole, to meet at this point when executing their errands of mercy. It was also their ancient privilege to rest there and be refreshed with a drink of mingled water and vinegar because of the steepness of the way. In the latter part of the nineteenth century, when the Earl of Crawford and Belcarres owned the villa, a new road was opened and this

old road was then closed so that the Misericordia Brethren now meet and rest in a little garden by the gate.

From the time of Boccaccio the Villa Palmieri has always been a centre of literary associations, especially during the life of Matteo Palmieri, a friend of Cosimo de' Medici the Elder and of all the famous humanists of the period, being himself a scholar and author of no mean reputation at a time when Florence was full of the fame of Pico della Mirandola, Marsilio Ficino, and other gifted members of that goodly company of the Renaissance.

For several years after buying the villa, Matteo Palmieri, finding its seclusion and beauty conducive to his literary labours, devoted much of his time to the composition of sundry treatises, among them his *De Captivitate Pisarum* and the *Vita di Niccolò Acciaiuoli.* The most important, however, was his philosophical poem, *Città di Vita* describing the author's journey through the Elysian fields, guided on his way by the Cumæan Sibyl. This poem was read in manuscript and received high praise, but it was never published. Matteo sealed it up and gave it to the Pro-Consul of the Guild of Notaries, to be opened after his death. In 1475, at his funeral, it was laid on his coffin as a token of great honour. When, eventually, the contents of the *Città di Vita* became generally known, it was declared to be contaminated by the heretical opinions of Origen regarding the probationary incarnation of angels in human bodies, and the officers of the Inquisition wished to exhume Palmieri and burn his body and the accursed poem in one fire. The Florentine authorities, however, intervened. Palmieri's body was allowed to remain undisturbed in San Pier Maggiore and, as a compromise, the pernicious manuscript was returned to the care of the Pro-Consul of the Notaries. Several pages were damaged when the Arno flooded the city in 1557. It was then removed to the Laurentian Library and locked up in a cupboard of which not even the librarian was permitted to have the key for many years afterward lest his soul be harmed by the false doctrines. The manuscript is beautifully illuminated with the Signs of the Zodiack and various other devices and is now numbered amongst the special treasures of the library.

Sandro Botticelli, along with other famous artists and literary men, was a frequent visitor at the Villa Palmieri. Vasari tells us that Botticelli was commissioned to paint an altar-piece for the Palmieri chapel in San Pier Maggiore " with an infinite number of figures, being the Assumption of Our Lady, with the zones of the heavens, the Patriarchs, the Prophets, the Apostles, the Evangelists, the Martyrs, the Confessors, the Doctors, the Virgins and the Hierarchies; all after the design given him by Matteo, who was a man of letters and of learning: and he executed the work after a masterly fashion and with extreme diligence. He pourtrayed Matteo and

his wife kneeling at the foot of the picture. But although this work was most beautiful and ought to have been above envy, there were some malicious and evil-speaking persons who being unable to abuse it in other ways, said Matteo and Sandro had fallen into the grave sin of heresy; let none expect an opinion from me as to whether this be true or not; enough that the figures painted by Sandro are in truth worthy of praise for the great work he had in designing the circles of the heavens and fitting foreshortenings and landscapes in divers different ways between the figures and the angels; everything being exceedingly well drawn." The Inquisition condemned this picture also, and wished to have it destroyed, but it was carried off to the Villa Palmieri and walled up until the beginning of the nineteenth century, when it was sold, passing eventually into the possession of the Duke of Hamilton, and finally, in 1882, becoming the property of the National Gallery in London.

In 1765 the Earl Cowper bought the Villa Palmieri and made it once more the centre of Florentine literary life in his day. In 1824 the heirs of Lord Cowper sold the villa to Miss Mary Farhill who willed the estate, at her death, to her friend Marie Antoinette, the last Grand Duchess of Tuscany. The Grand Duchess sold the villa, in 1873, to the Earl of Crawford and Balcarres. After his death, in 1880, the Countess dowager continued to live there and on two occasions, in 1888 and again in 1893, entertained Queen Victoria for periods of a month or more. The present owner bought the villa in 1907 and has consistently pursued extensive works of restoration.

Notwithstanding the generally Baroque character of the exterior imparted by the additions and alterations undertaken by Palmiero Palmieri, the plan of the house is plainly of Renaissance origin, being constructed about three sides of the *cortile*, while the enclosure of the fourth side is completed by the loggia (Plates 238 and 239). The loggia, in turn, is closed in from the terrace by a curtain wall (Plate 236) and above it are chambers (Plate 238), an arrangement similar to that at Cigliano. The interior, also, is clearly indicative of Renaissance origin with its lunette-vaulted ceilings, the design of its carved fireplaces and doorways, and the ancient painted decorations still preserved on the walls. The thirteenth century doorway (Plates 239 and 240) in the *cortile* is another insistent reminder of the house's age.

The north doorway, and the graceful wrought iron balcony above it (Plates 229 and 231), are excellent examples of the restrained Tuscan Baroque manner. The south doorway, with the polychrome decorations, is a *cinquecento*-Baroque compromise (Plate 237). The actual stonework surrounding the doorway belongs to the sixteenth century; the pilasters that flank the doorway are painted, with a very little assistance from stucco in low relief, while the capitals, entablature and superposed ornament are altogether painted on a flat surface—one of the adroit feats of illusion in

which the Baroque age excelled. While there are many who will not wholly approve this species of embellishment, they can experience only unqualified admiration for the splendid balustraded terrace, with its double ramp (Plate 232) descending in horse-shoe curves to the parterre below—terrace, ramp and parterre, all alike creations of the same age to which the polychrome overdoor decorations belong.

Outside the parterre below the terrace, and not far removed from it, is the box parterre laid out in the strictly geometrical manner of Renaissance usage (Plates 242–244). The coping of the retaining wall, and the ornaments on top of it (Plate 242) are of terra-cotta, as are also the steps and balustrade at the far side of the parterre (Plate 243) where one ascends to go to the pergola-bordered swimming pool with the pavilion at one side, adjoining the tennis lawn (Plate 241).

Although parts of the garden scheme are necessarily restorations, after the many vicissitudes through which the Villa Palmieri has passed, and other parts are new creations, the whole has been carried out in such perfect sympathy with old Italian ideals that the result is more than satisfying and one may well be thankful that this historic spot has fallen into such intelligent and reverent ownership.

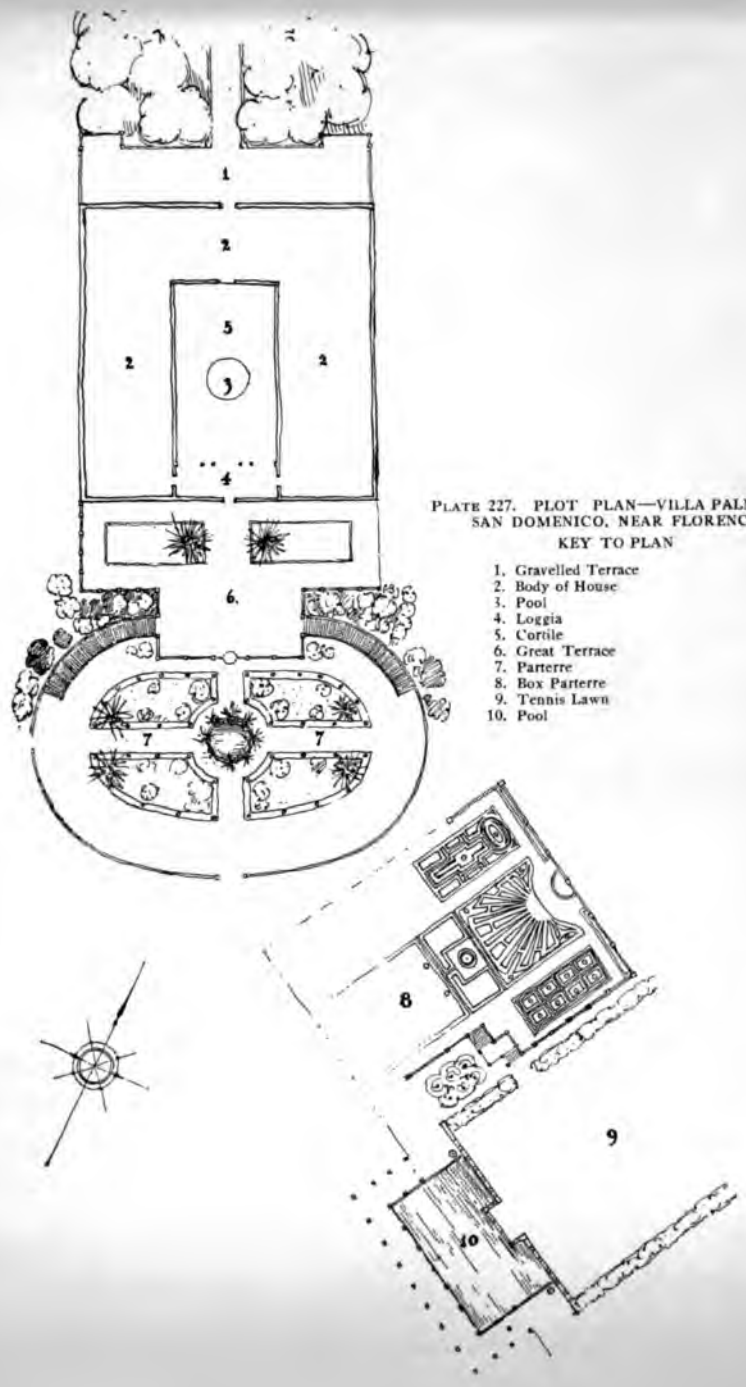


PLATE 227. PLOT PLAN—VILLA PALMIERI, SAN DOMENICO, NEAR FLORENCE

KEY TO PLAN

1. Gravelled Terrace
2. Body of House
3. Pool
4. Loggia
5. Cortile
6. Great Terrace
7. Parterre
8. Box Parterre
9. Tennis Lawn
10. Pool

PLATE 228. THE INNER GATEWAY—VILLA PALMIERI

PLATE 229. APPROACH TO NORTH FRONT—VILLA PALMIERI

PLATE 230. NORTH FRONT—VILLA PALMIERI

PLATE 231. *PORTONE*—VILLA PALMIERI

PLATE 232. PARTERRE, TERRACE AND SOUTH FRONT—VILLA PALMIERI

PLATE 233. GATEWAY TO PARTERRE—VILLA PALMIERI

PLATE 234. THE CHAPEL—VILLA PALMIERI

PLATE 235. RAMP FROM PARTERRE TO TERRACE—VILLA PALMIERI

PLATE 216. SOUTH FRONT AND TERRACE—VILLA PALMIERI

PLATE 237. SOUTH DOOR AND CLOCK—VILLA PALMIERI

PLATE 238. CORTILE AND LOGGIO—VILLA PALMIERI

PLATE 239. WEST END OF LOGGIA—VILLA PALMIERI

PLATE 240. THIRTEENTH CENTURY DOOR IN CORTILE—VILLA PALMIERI

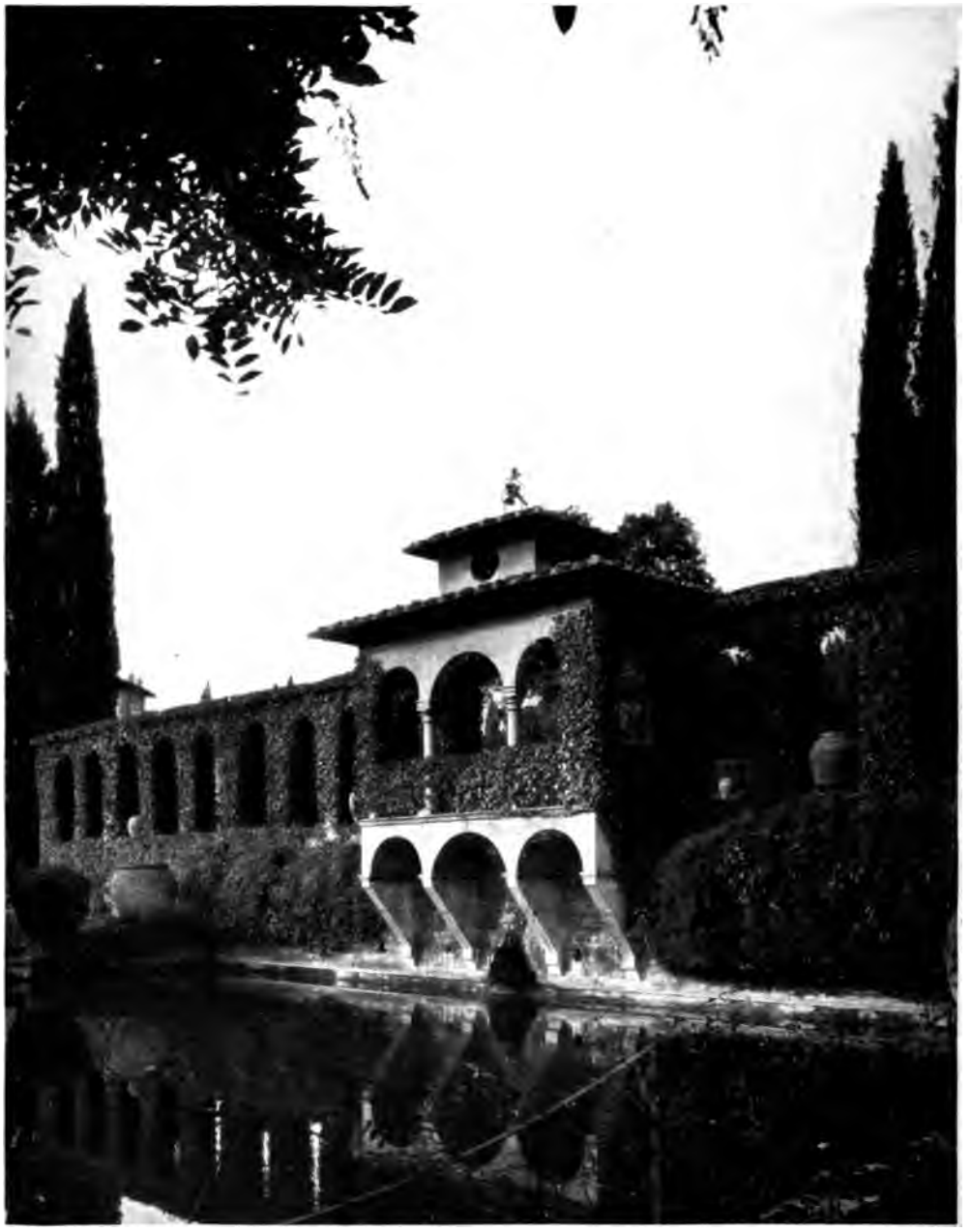


PLATE 241. THE POOL—VILLA PALMIERI

PLATE 242. BOX PARTERRE AND TERRACE WALL—VILLA PALMIERI

PLATE 243. BOX PARTERRE AND STAIR TO POOL ENCLOSURE—VILLA PALMIERI

PLATE 244. BOX PARTERRE AND WELL HEAD—VILLA PALMIERI

THE VILLA CETINALE, NEAR SIENA

THE Villa Cetinale, lying about eight and an half miles to the southwest of Siena, was designed by the eminent Baroque architect Carlo Fontana and built in 1680 for Flavio Chigi, nephew to Pope Alexander VII. The villa is still a possession of the Chigi family and the estate is well kept up so that it faithfully exemplifies the sevententh century manner of villa design in every respect.

The approach to Cetinale is something of a surprise for you are scarcely aware of its presence until you suddenly emerge from a cross alley (Plate 247) directly before the south front of the house (Plate 249). This aspect is exceedingly striking and strong in dramatic values. Between the gate and the house is a parterre with box-edged beds geometrically planned; from the gate a broad grass alley, bounded by low walls and a dense growth of clipped ilex trees on each side (Plate 246), extends a long distance downhill toward the valley below. The effect of this composition is imposing and thoroughly satisfying without at all suggesting pomposity or the vainglorious ostentation that its adverse critics so often profess to find in the work of Baroque architects and garden designers.

The house and parterre, along with a small tract of lawn on the sides and at the north, stand on a little plateau barely large enough to comport with the dignity of the structure. The park comes close up on the east side, while on the west, beyond a low parapet, arranged in two tiers to form a seat (Plate 248), the ground drops to a much lower level for the flower gardens. The kitchens and cellars, curiously enough, extend under the narrow strip of lawn to the west of the house, having their opening into the flower garden, and the kitchen chimney is whimsically brought up as a projection above the parapet.

Save for two projecting pavilions at the corners of the south front, between which is a triple-arched loggia (Plate 249) on the ground floor, the house is a compact rectangle in plan. There are certain indications that there was originally a first floor loggia directly above the ground floor loggia and that the arches were subsequently walled in to form a long room or gallery. In the treatment of this façade, with pavilions and loggias, Fontana seems to have reverted to a somewhat earlier tradition in his design. Although florid in style, the south front displays breadth and dignity in its conception.

The more austere north front, however (Plates 250 and 251), with its divided and returned staircase, is a far finer piece of composition and a better measure of Fontana's ability. It is every whit as essentially Baroque as the south façade, but it is Baroque of a more serious tone. It is altogether more convincing and has the stability of purpose and the staying quality

that one can joy in living with. It is solid meat, whereas too much of the south front would become like confectionery.

Over against the north front, at a little distance, and on axis with it, is the portal (Plate 252) that gives access to the long terrace, at the far end of which an alley is cut through the trees straight up the hillside to a votive building at the top. In its characteristic smug way, Baedeker's Guide Book notes that "with the villa is connected the 'Thebais' park, embellished with Baroque sculptures and chapels and containing fine old timber. View from the hill ('Romitorio') above the villa." Such an annotation is scarcely enough to tempt one to explore one of the loveliest villas in the vicinity of Siena. Indeed, it is rather discouraging than otherwise. But if the villa-lover will disregard this damnation with faint praise, he will be richly rewarded by the delights of a nobly planned and nobly executed garden scheme. The vista of the terrace through the ivy-clad portal should prove a sufficient earnest and guaranty of this promise. It is but one of the incidents to the entire composition.

Whatever one may think individually of the works of the Baroque age, it is not to be denied that the masters of that period understood the secret of employing an heroic scale and producing noble effects not only with buildings but also with comprehensive garden planning as well. The gardens of the early Renaissance were often gems of tender and appealing beauty, but they were intimate things planned on an intimate scale and oftentimes their schemes, though fascinating and richly suggestive, were not fully co-ordinated. In the realm of garden design the Baroque architects stand pre-eminent. They thought in larger terms than did their predecessors. To their genius and inspiration we owe nearly all of the great garden undertakings executed in Italy and, secondarily, all subsequent garden developments elsewhere that were inspired by Italian precedent. They knew how to handle big projects successfully; they had mastered the art of using great masses of foliage of divers sorts and of securing striking effects by simple and permanent means; they understood the full interrelation of art and nature, of architecture and planting; they let nature do the work where it could and then accented it and brought it into bounds with art; in short, they achieved the happiest kind of alliance between art and nature, and that without the pedantic affectation of "Capability" Brown and his followers. Let us honour them for it.

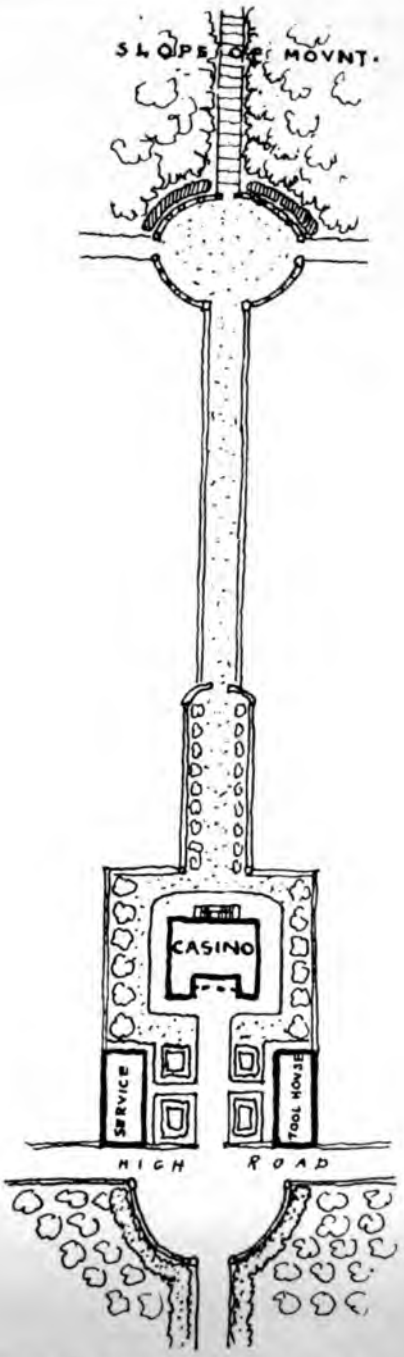


PLATE 245. PLOT PLAN—CETINALE, NEAR SIENA

PLATE 246. VIALE OF ILEXES AND ENTRANCE—VILLA CETINALE

PLATE 248. UPPER GARDEN PARAPET—VILLA CETINALE

PLATE 247. CROSS ALLEY AT ENTRANCE—VILLA CETINALE

PLATE 249. SOUTH FRONT—VILLA CETINALE

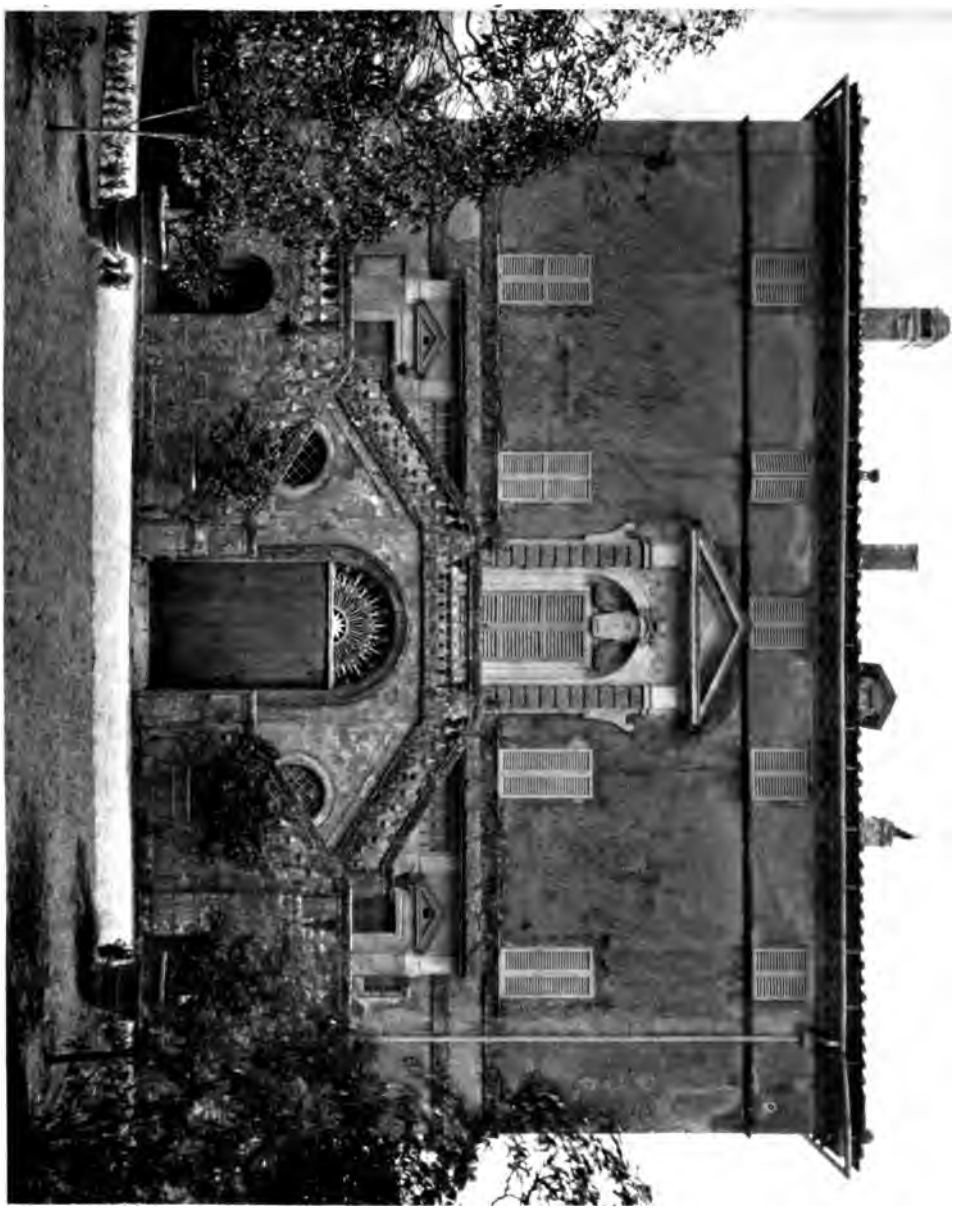


PLATE 250. NORTH FRONT—VILLA CETINALE

PLATE 251. OUTSIDE STAIRCASE, NORTH FRONT—VILLA CETINALE

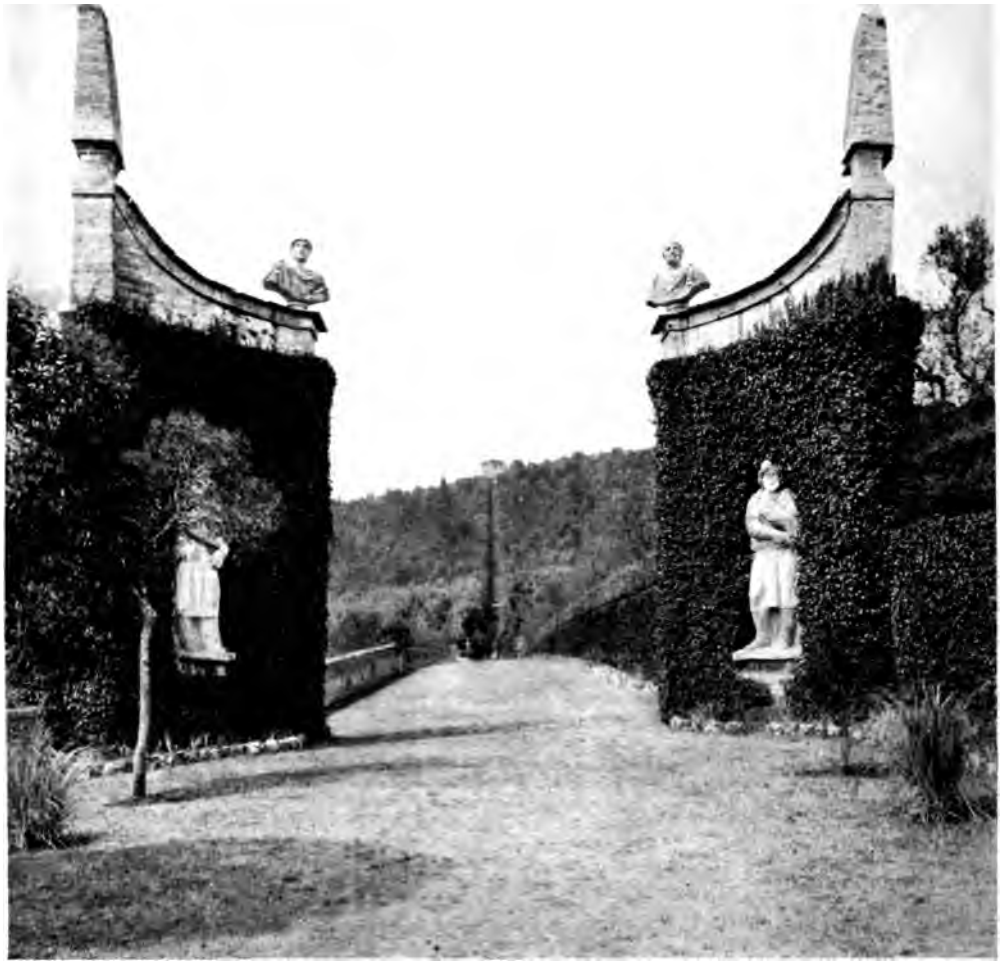


PLATE 252. ENTRANCE TO TERRACE—VILLA CETINALE

PLATE 253. THE CHAPEL—VILLA CETINALE

PLATE 254 ROAD TO LOWER GARDEN—VILLA CETINALE

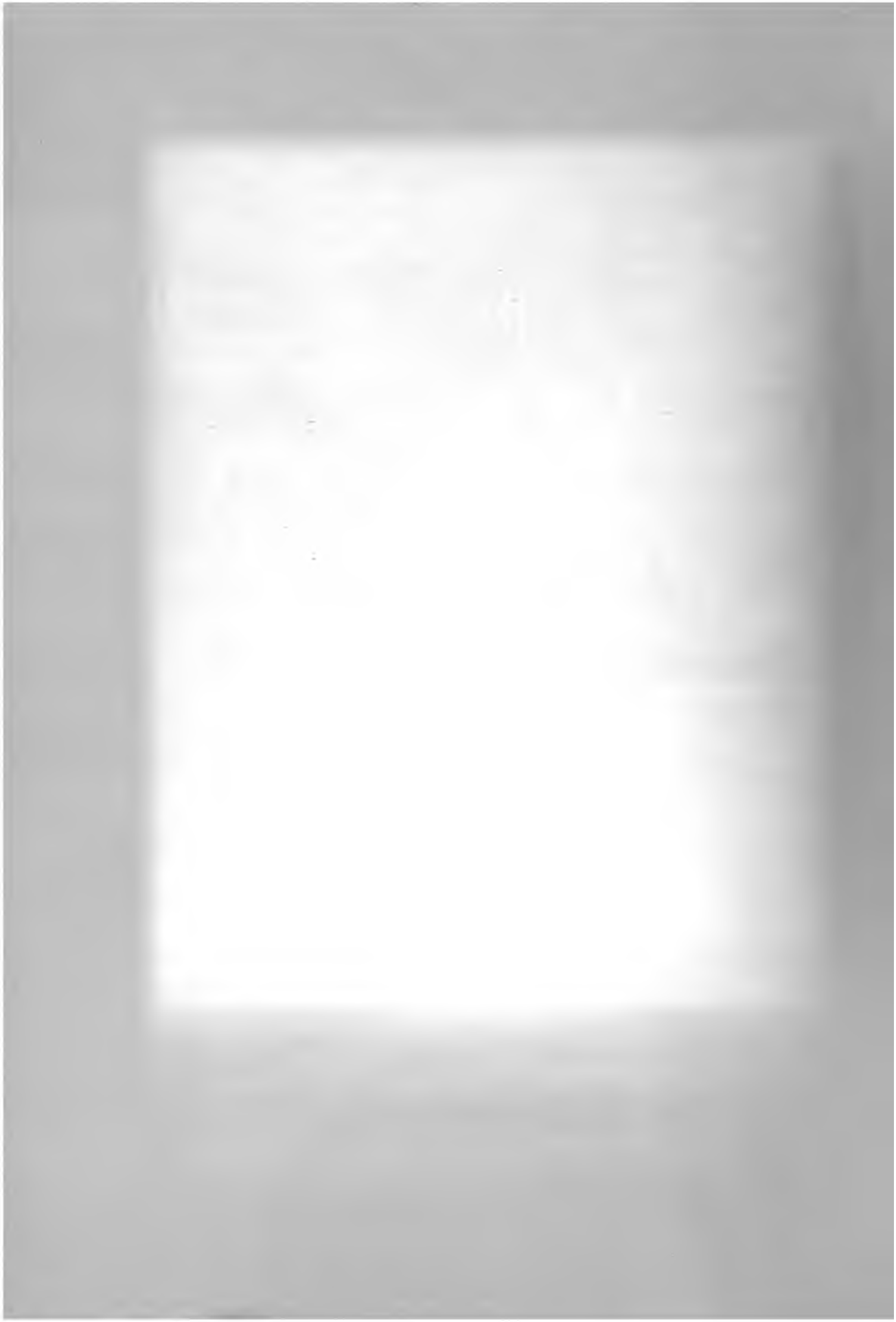
LE MASCHERE, IN THE MUGELLO

LE MASCHERE is one of those rare creations of architecture and natural setting that forcibly strikes one with admiration at first sight, and then, upon closer acquaintance, the sense of admiration continues to grow and abides. It often happens that what is impressive upon first acquaintance, subsequently loses much of its charm and glamour. Not so Le Maschere. The seventeenth century architect was singularly blessed in the site chosen for the villa, and in his performance he proved that he thoroughly understood the value of the opportunity nature had given him and that he was wholly worthy of the gift.

The villa lies on the flank of an high hill and looks across a broad valley to the rugged peaks of the Apennines beyond. The approach is by a gradual ascent through a park truly magnificent in extent and in the character of the timber. To live up to such a setting, the house is, as it needs must be, of imposing front and august dignity.

There is a marked difference in treatment between the east (Plates 255 and 256) and west (Plate 259) fronts, so much so, in fact, that it is hard for one who sees only the illustrations, and has not visited the place itself, to realise that the two façades belong to the same structure. And yet the composition has been so managed that this diversity of aspect is not in the least inconsistent. Indeed, the lie of the land, which is considerably higher on the west front, invited a different scheme. Although the two buildings are utterly unlike in style, one is reminded of Masèr, in the Trevigiano, by the similar method of adapting a long structure to a steep hillside site.

The long, low west front, which opens on a parterre with geometrically designed and box-edged beds and a circular pool, is somewhat more academic than the east front. The doorway and the ground floor windows (Plate 260) flanking it possess a bold and dominating dignity that stamps the façade with a thoroughly distinctive character. The patterning of the whole wall surface with large *sgrafitto* panels is quite in accord with the practice of the period. The ground colour of the stucco is an ochre brown, while the broad bands defining the panels are in brown of a much deeper tone. This is an exceptionally good example of this sort of wall decoration. The chapel (Plate 257) is at the southwest corner of the west front and the chapel door opens to the south. The metopes of the frieze above the central portion of the west front (Plate 258) are filled with different representations of the traditional Italian masques, whence the name of the villa.



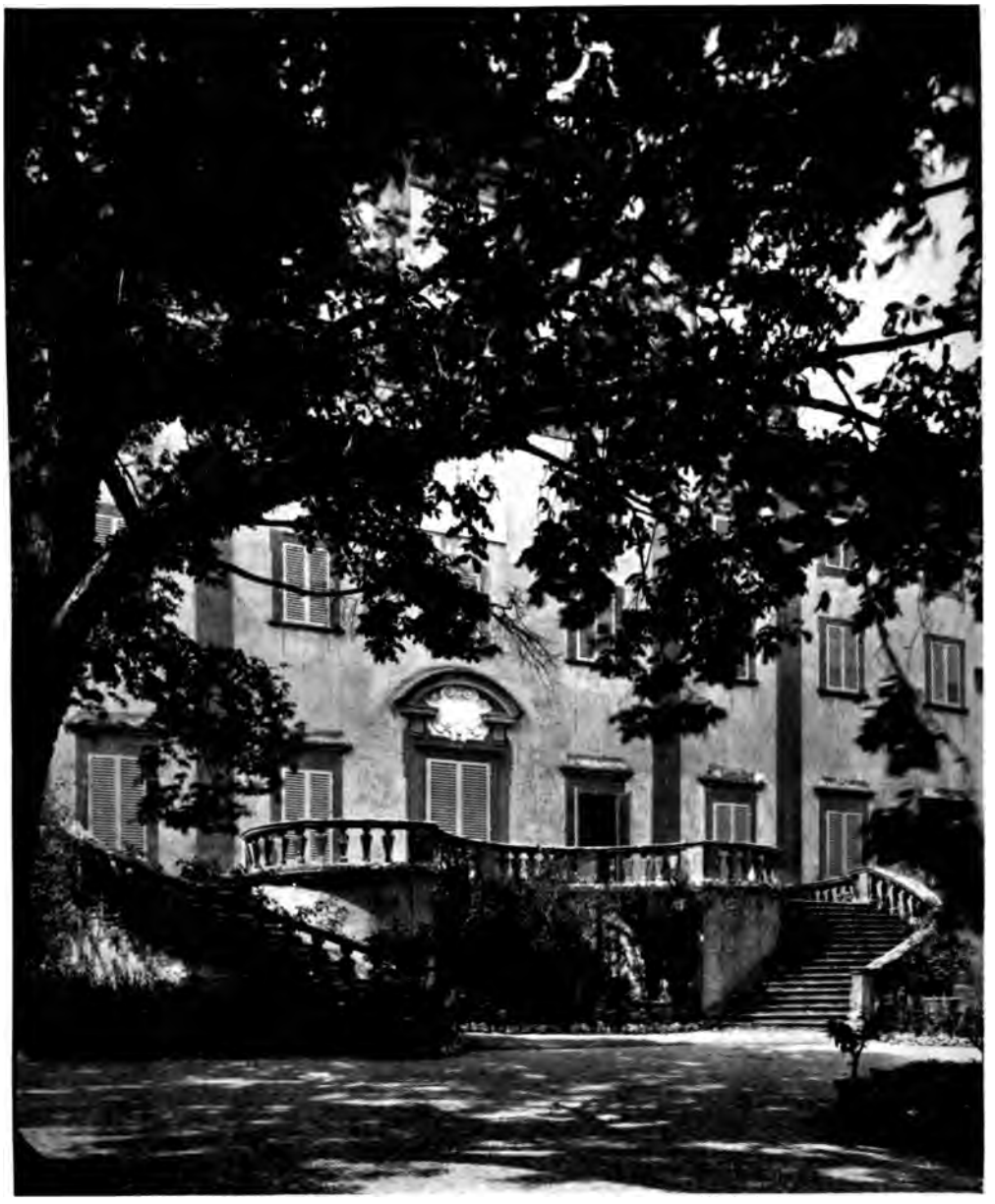


PLATE 255. ENTRANCE, EAST FRONT—LE MASCHERE

PLATE 256. EAST FRONT—LE MASCHERE

PLATE 257. THE CHAPEL—LE MASCHERE

PLATE 258. WEST DOOR—LE MASCHERE

PLATE 259. NORTH FRONT—LE MASCHERE

PLATE 260. WEST FRONT—LE MASCHERE

THE VILLA GARZONI AT COLLODI, NEAR PESCIA

Now Collodi is near Pescia, and Pescia is not far distant from Lucca. So much for geographical accuracy. The Villa Garzoni—both *palazzo* and gardens—is, as we see it to-day, a creation of the mid-seventeenth century. However, the villa is really much older than that. In the Middle Ages Collodi belonged to the See of Lucca, and where the Baroque *palazzo* now stands, then stood a strongly fortified castle with the little town nestling within the castle walls, farther up the hill behind it. This fact explains a peculiarity in the plan of the villa, as we shall see by-and-by. To the castle of Collodi the Florentines laid siege in 1430 but so valiantly did the little town hold out against its besiegers that their efforts were barren of result. Seven years later the Florentines were more successful in their attempts to gain the mastery of Collodi, but in 1442, by the provisions of a treaty, it was restored to Lucca.

In the middle of the seventeenth century, the Garzoni family, who were the lords of all this region, replaced the mediæval castle by the present structure (Plate 262) for a country seat, and the gardens were then laid out on the adjacent slopes in full view of its windows. Standing, as it does, to one side of the gardens and above them, and in a place difficult of access, it spans as did its predecessor the one road of approach to the town which still lies on the hill behind it. To reach the town, therefore, it is necessary to climb the road through the groves, ascend the fourfold ramp (Plate 263), enter the high-arched portal of the palace itself, pass through the arcaded *cortile* at the rear, and then continue up a steep, stone-paved street, or rather lane (Plate 265), to the humbler dwellings of the townsfolk. It seems an anomalous arrangement to have the highway traversing the garden and passing right through the palace, but the road has been so successfully screened for the most part and the whole scheme so well contrived that one is hardly aware of what has been done.

The *palazzo* is an oblong rectangle, relying for its imposing effect upon its commanding position, the apportionment of its masses, the shapely *belvedere* by which it is crowned, and the heroic-sized figures surmounting the roof, rather than upon florid ornament. Its composition is exceedingly simple and exemplifies the restraint of which the Baroque architects were capable, when it suited their purpose, as it did in this instance where the structure could be viewed satisfactorily only from a distance. Elaborate detail would have been quite lost. It is far otherwise with the pavilion (Plate 265) back of the *palazzo*. This building, primarily intended to screen the town, can be seen only at close range and exhibits all the familiar forms of embellish-

ment beloved of the seventeenth century Italian architects. In its own way, it is a skillful and agreeable bit of architectural pleasantry and admirably suits the purpose for which it was intended.

Amongst the great achievements of Italian garden making, the gardens of the Villa Garzoni occupy a position that challenges the attention of anyone to whom the art of garden design makes an appeal. Few gardens can be reckoned superior to them, even those in the neighbourhood of Rome with all their marvellous endowment of natural conditions and all the magnificence of art that has been lavished upon them. In all of Tuscany there is nothing finer of the sort to be found, nor can their particular kind of charm be surpassed in the north of Italy. Furthermore, they enjoy the distinction of being numbered with the comparatively few gardens that have come down to us in virtually that state which was intended by the original designers. What is scarcely less important, they have been maintained in good order so that the full measure of their beauty appears, undimmed by neglect or the ravages of time.

The gardens lie in the concave curve of a steep hillside with a southern and southwestern exposure. At the foot of the hill is the principal entrance and for a short distance within the gate the ground is level or only gently sloping. Then a rapid sweep upward displays a panorama of all the area comprised within the garden bounds. Near the top of the hill to the left is the *palazzo,* reached by a long ascent. Directly in front, beyond the divisions of the parterre which cover the intermediate rise, the eye follows a succession of balustraded steps and terraces (Plate 266) leading up to a long vista of the cascade that descends from the wooded crest of the hill between thick groves of trimmed ilex trees. It would be hard to imagine anything of the sort exceeding in dramatic force this skillfully planned composition which, at one comprehensive glance, discloses the vast promise of untold delights to be leisurely explored in detail as the visitor advances.

The lower part of the garden, sloping gradually upward and devoted to the parterre, is divided in the middle by a broad ramped path, bordered by close-clipped box hedges. The middle portion of this sloping avenue, gravelled like the footpaths at each side, is embellished with bold arabesque patterns wrought in vari-coloured stones and outlined with low box. The intricate patterns in the parterre (Plate 269) are executed in the same manner, that is to say, the sundry devices are carried out in vari-hued marbles and stones, set according to a carefully considered colour scheme, and these beds of stonework, resembling raised embroidery when viewed from a distance (Plate 264), are sharply defined by a narrow edging of low box plants.

The seventeenth century *parterre de broderie* was often a garden abso-

lutely without flowers or grass. On a groundwork of gravel, scrolls and other fanciful designs, spread forth in sand, gravel or stones of divers pronounced and contrasting colours, might or might not be outlined with low-clipped boxwood. The primary considerations in these *parterres de broderie* were boldness of pattern and boldness of colour. They were meant to be viewed from a distance and their whole effect was intended to be taken in at a glance.

Whatever we may think of the taste that prompted the employment of such devices, they formed a well-recognised element in the seventeenth century system of garden making and were often used with telling effect. At times the designers displayed an extraordinary ingenuity of treatment and compassed a baffling complexity of scrolls and mazes rivalling the parts of an ornate Cosmatic pavement; then, again, they were content with an array of more obvious geometrical forms.

To have a parterre of the sort just described was evidently the intention of those who planned the gardens of the Villa Garzoni, and doubtless the scheme was carried out in the approved manner of the day, but in the lapse of years flowers have gradually encroached upon the realm once devoted to sand, gravel and stone, with box outlinings, and the result is so pleasing —though not orthodox, according to archæological standards—that one would not willingly see them banished.

Whatever regrets the garden archæologist may entertain over the presence of flowers in the *parterre de broderie,* unreserved enthusiasm can be bestowed upon the treatment of the clipped boxwood. Conical forms cut into diminishing convex spirals, cylindrical drums, globes and other topiary conceits have been admirably executed and disposed in an extremely effective manner that conveys a gratifying sense of firm definition and stability of design. In regarding the clipped boxwood ranged along the central avenue from the gate to the base of the terraces, set along the high surrounding hedges, and placed at various other points in the composition of the parterre, one should recognise the scope thus given for an engaging play of light and shade which the unclipped bushes do not afford. The high bounding hedges themselves (Plates 262, 264 and 269), composed of clipped cypress, laurel, yew and box commingled, and enclosing pleached alleys, present another and no less striking example of old Italian topiary methods whose masters fully understood the great value of bold, emphatic architectural forms cut from dense masses of ordered greenery.

The crowning triumph of water gardening at the Villa Garzoni is the cascade (Plate 267) which descends from the top of the hill and terminates at the third or upper terrace, the water being thence conveyed by underground channels to supply a succession of fountains and pools at lower levels. At the head of the cascade, set on an half-circle of lofty cypresses,

a more than heroic-sized figure of Fame blows through her trumpet a great jet of water which splashes into a pool before the goddess's pedestal, thence to be conveyed over a triple descent of steps and pools enlivened by a series of fantastic little spurts and gushes. Reclining female figures, emblematic of Florence and Lucca (Plate 267), preside over the upper bason, while large grotesque birds, perched on the rocks about the lowest pool, pour streams of water from their bills.

On the hill behind Fame, concealed from view by a grove of cypress trees, is a bath-house appointed with bathrooms, marble baths, dressing-rooms, and two *salons* where the bathers might dally after their plunge and regale themselves with dainty cates fetched thither from the palace. There are elaborate decorations in white, blue and gold, with frescoes in which *amorini* disport themselves amidst ribbons, garlands and clouds. The exquisite furnishings with faded silks and brocades are still in place. High up, overlooking the *salons,* baths and dressing-rooms, is a minstrels' gallery whence musicians were wont to discourse sweet strains for the delectation of those who performed their ablutions in this sumptuous setting. This bath-house and its appointments form an illuminating commentary upon the luxurious manner of life in a great seventeenth century Italian villa.

Between the cascade and the *palazzo,* approached by the upper terrace, is an open-air theatre. The turfed stage, completely shaded by overarching trees, is raised several feet above the walk and bounded by a low hedge of clipped box, within which is the prompter's seat. Closely clipped box-trees likewise form the wings and background, while several statues at the sides and a niched fountain at the rear complete the setting.

Nearby the palace is a labyrinth whose windings—unlike those more usually met with—are separated by trellises which support a body of foliage not too dense to hide from each other those wandering in the maze of paths. The goal is a grotto, at one end, equipped with a fountain and water surprises. There are also other water surprises to be encountered in the paths. in the shape of deftly concealed jets which unexpectedly spurt tiny sprays from the ground and other quarters equally unthought of, so that retreat is cut off and the unwary person caught in this trap rarely escapes without a sound drenching. The contrivance of these practical jokes was a very favourite device with seventeenth century garden designers, not only in Italy but elsewhere as well. Evelyn, in his *Diary,* mentions a number of them in the account of his travels on the Continent, and likewise describes many other ways in which the ingenious engineers managed to enhance the interest which running water was made to supply in garden schemes.

A word must be said about the extensive use of hard stucco statuary at the villa Garzoni and in other gardens of similar character. There are those who, nurtured upon Ruskinian principles and prejudices, deplore the em-

ployment of such embellishments as unworthy and contrary to the ideals which should inspire those whose function it is to display the elegancies of nature. To this objection the answer may be made that the seventeenth century garden designers were wiser in their generation than are their critics. The object before them was to produce an effect of emphasis and contrast when the composition was viewed as an whole, or in sections as large as the lie of the land permitted. The individual pieces of stucco statuary were not regarded primarily as finished products of the sculptor's art. That aspect was altogether subsidiary. They were, first and foremost, contributory items to a comprehensive setting, elements necessary to the whole *ensemble,* and their character, jocular or serious as the case might be, was but a justifiable bit of allusive by-play in the composition. Impartially viewed, as these gardens were intended by their designers to be viewed, the results achieved fully vindicate the means employed.

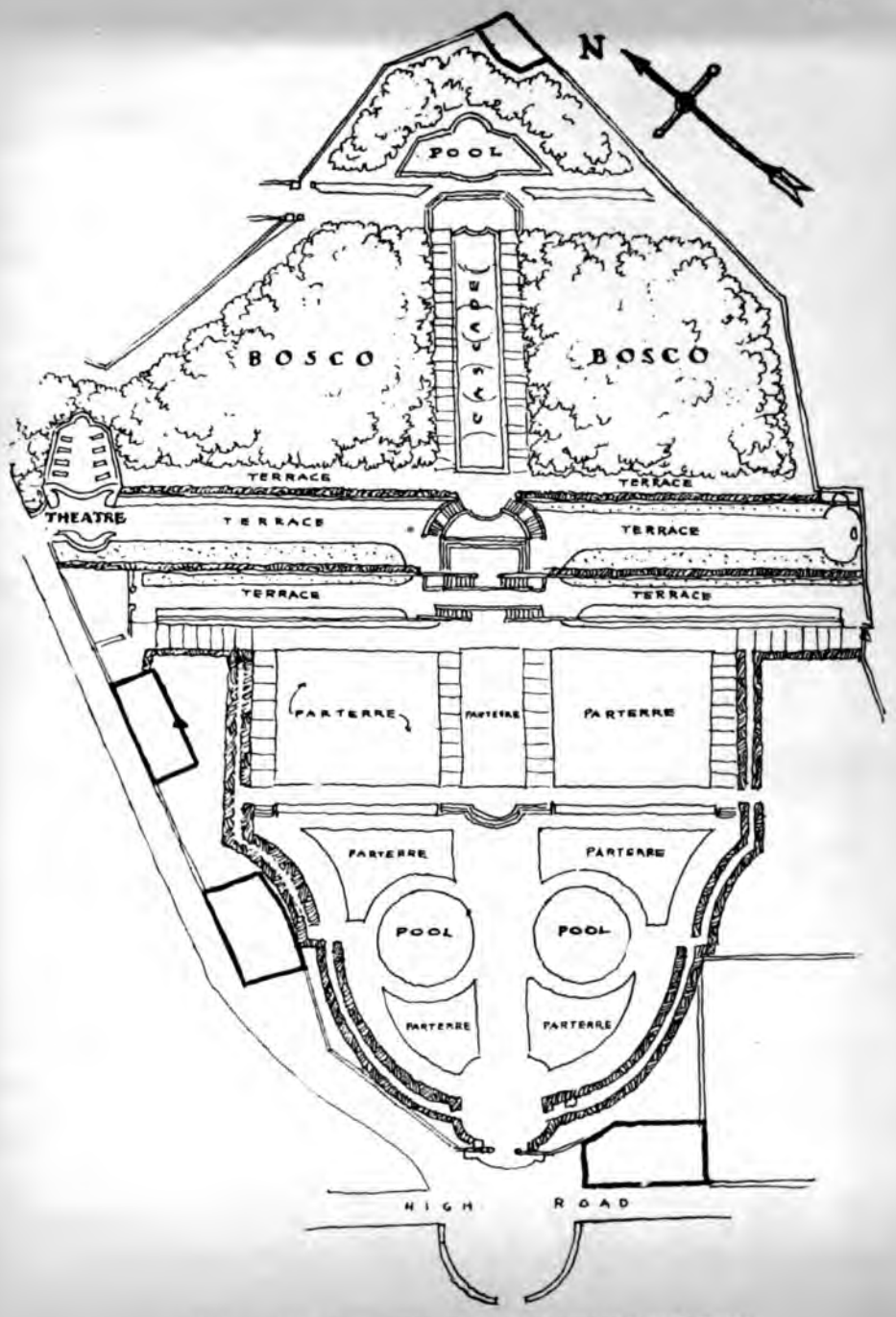


PLATE 261. PLOT PLAN—VILLA GARZONI, AT COLLODI, NEAR PESCIA

PLATE 262. PARTERRE AND PALAZZO—VILLA GARZONI

PLATE 265. PAVILION BACK OF THE PALAZZO—VILLA GARZONI

PLATE 267. CASCADE, LOOKING UP FROM UPPER TERRACE—VILLA GARZONI

PLATE 268. PARTERRE AND POOLS, FROM TOP OF CASCADE—VILLA GARZONI

PLATE 269. THE *PARTERRE DE BRODERIE*—VILLA GARZONI

THE VILLA CORSI-SALVIATI (GUICCIARDINI), AT SESTO, NEAR FLORENCE

You might pass to and fro a thousand times through the narrow, dusty little street of Sesto without ever dreaming of what certain walls along the south side of that busy thoroughfare conceal unless, by a fortunate chance, several doors at one particular spot happened to be open simultaneously, revealing the merest glimpse of the loveliness within. Seen from the street, the Villa Corsi-Salviati presents a bleak, uninteresting grey stucco wall, pierced at intervals by windows that utterly fail to intrigue the imagination. For aught of promise conveyed by its northern or road aspect, it might as well be a tenement or a factory.

But enter a door, pass through a court and out through another doorway, and the sudden change is astounding. It is like being transported in the twinkling of an eye from purgatory into paradise. You find yourself most unexpectedly in the midst of a garden (Plate 272) which, as Guido Carocci truly says, "is amongst the most beautiful and delightful of those created in that seventeenth century, in which everything had to be in keeping with the pomp of life, and with the magnificence of costumes and manners." "This garden," he continues, "lies to the south of the buildings, occupying a long tract of level ground, embellished with ponds and pools, with fountains and ingeniously contrived jets of water, with shady groves enriched with statues, vases, grottoes and rustic adornments, with thickets and with borders wherein grow luxuriantly the most beautiful flowers and where the rarest plants are nurtured." This sounds almost like one of the fanciful descriptions of the fabled gardens of Classic antiquity penned by the Italian romancers of the Renaissance; in very truth it is but a partial and altogether veracious account to which much more, indeed, might have been added without risk of exaggeration.

From a remote period, "to which the memory of man runneth not back," the Carnesecchi family owned a manor house and land on this spot. In January, 1502, Luca di Andrea Carnesecchi sold the manor house, with walled garden, dovecotes and sundry other appurtenances to Simone di Jacopo Corsi. The rebuilding and embellishment of the villa were undertaken by the Corsi family in the following century "with all that pomp and magnificence which the taste and the elegance of the period demanded and which the wealth of that illustrious family made possible." The most celebrated artists, Carocci assures us, "were employed upon the new buildings, and upon the decorations in stucco and frescoes." Amongst others of those so engaged "should be recorded the names of two pleasing and brilliant painters: *Federigo Zuccheri* and *Baccio Del Bianco.*" The work of rehabilitation was begun in 1632 and finished in 1660. The result was a stately dwelling with subsidiary buildings and gardens all thoroughly

representative of the seventeenth century Baroque manner at its best. It is fortunate that buildings and gardens have been maintained in the form they were then given. Those who ignorantly rail at Baroque as a debased and vicious style would do well to study the Villa Corsi-Salviati carefully before giving full rein to their prejudice.

Inside, the house shews many traces of its early origin, but outside the design has been made to conform consistently in every particular to the architectural mode in vogue at the period of its enlargement. The plan, of course, has been made to coincide with the environment. There was nothing to be gained by considering the road front on the north so the architecture on that side was left ungraced by any amenity and all the buildings were placed squarely on the line of the street so that all the ground might be saved for the south side where it would count most. It might truly be said that the buildings of the villa are buildings with only one side. All the architectural graces were lavished on the garden side of both the dwelling and the various dependencies.

Directly adjoining the south front of the dwelling is the parterre (Plate 271), geometrically laid out with gravelled walks and box-edged beds, such adjuncts as fountains, statuary (Plates 274 and 275), and the usual lemon trees in great earthen pots, which always serve to give accent and definition, being freely employed but disposed with excellent judgement. To the west of the parterre is the long pool or *vasca* (Plates 276 and 277), one end coming near to the loggia at the west end of the house. Again, west of the pool, are flower gardens and other delights, the architectural setting of every item being duly considered (Plates 278 and 279). To the south of the parterre is the park. The joy of extensive outlook being denied by the flatness of the ground, a compensation for this lack is provided by the *belvederi* (Plates 273 and 274) on the top of the house.

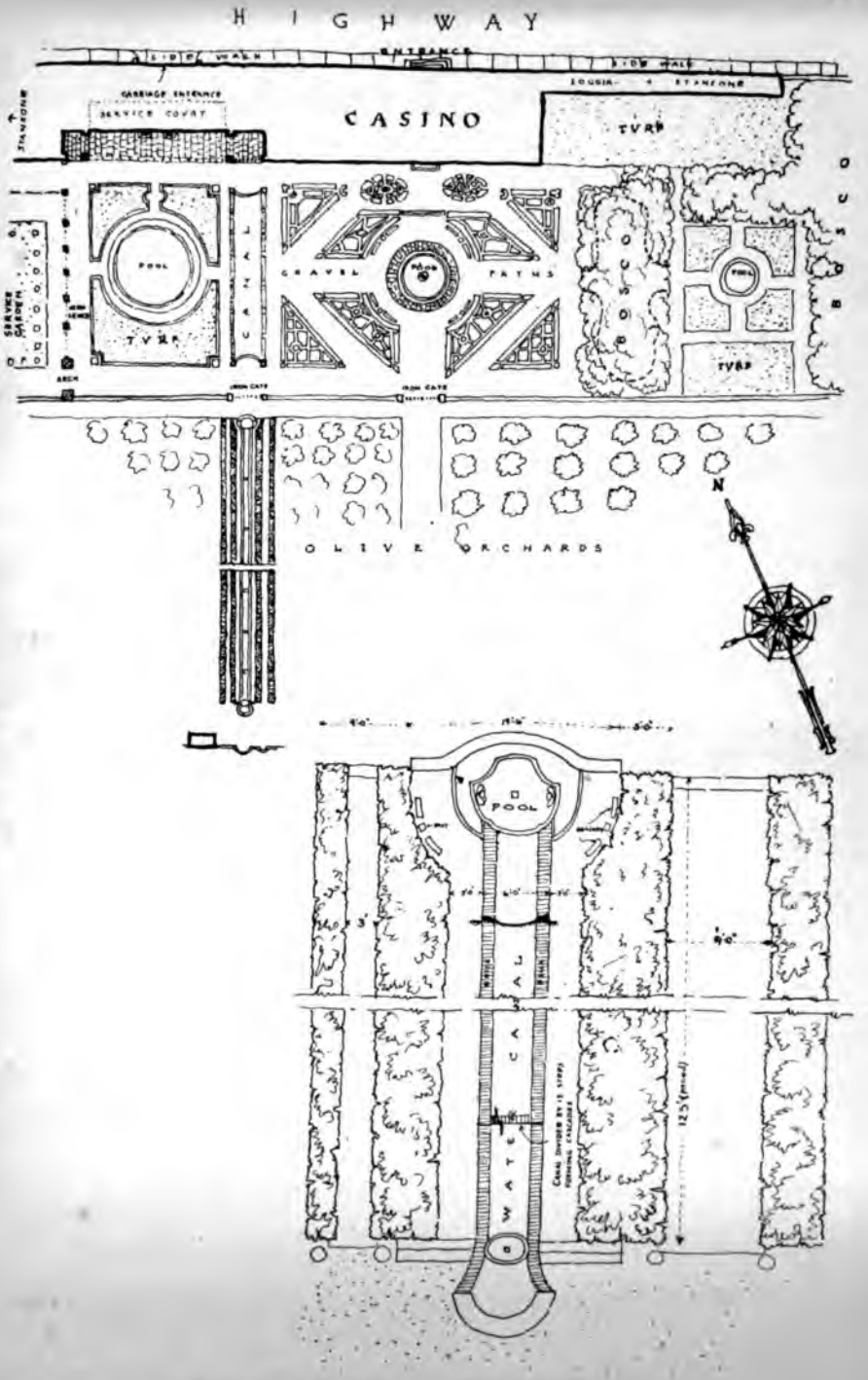


PLATE 270. PLOT PLAN—VILLA CORSI-SALVIATI, SESTO

PLATE 271. SOUTH FRONT—VILLA CORSI-SALVIATI

PLATE 272. SOUTH FRONT, PARTERRE AND POOL—VILLA CORSI-SALVIATI

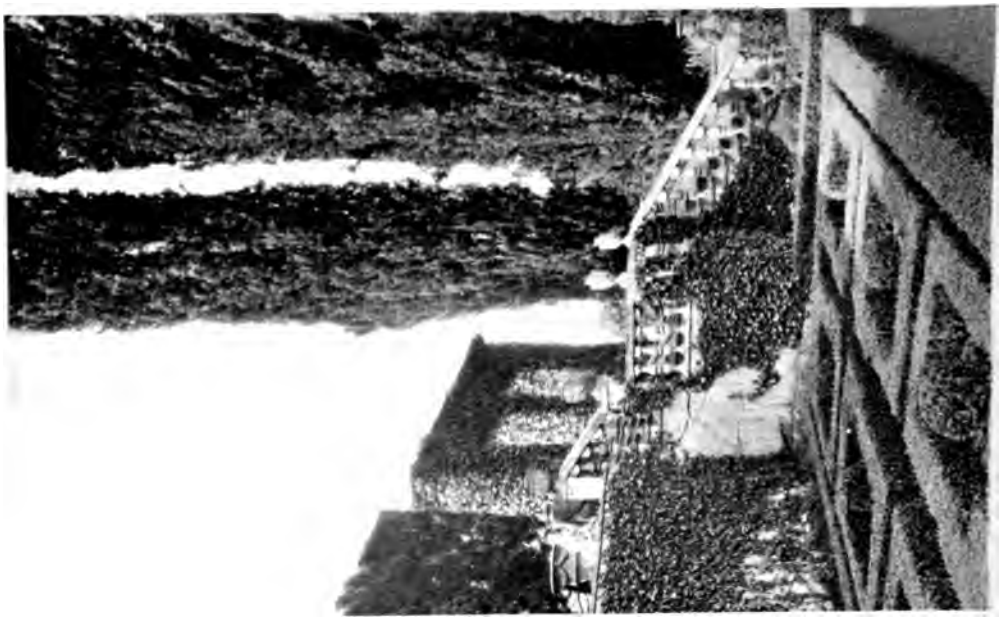


PLATE 274. FOUNTAIN AND POOL IN PARTERRE—VILLA CORSI-SALVIATI

PLATE 275. WEST BELVEDERE, SOUTH FRONT—VILLA CORSI-SALVIATI

PLATE 275. BOX-BORDERED BEDS IN PARTERRE—VILLA CORSI-SALVIATI

PLATE 276. LOGGETTA OVERLOOKING LONG POOL—VILLA CORSI-SALVIATI

PLATE 277. LONG POOL—VILLA CORSI-SALVIATI

PLATE 278. WALK AND GATEWAY IN GARDEN—VILLA CORSI-SALVIATI

PLATE 279. WEST POOL AND DEPENDENCIES—VILLA CORSI-SALVIATI

INDEX

A

Acquaio, 33
Alberti, Leon Battista, 77
Albizzi, Giovanna degli, 61
Allori, Alessandro, 223
Ammanati, Bartolommeo, 44, 223
Andrea del Sarto, 64, 223
Antinori, Alessandro di Niccolò, 81; family, 81, 82; Marchese Lodovico, 81; Niccolò Francesco, 81; Palazzo, 81.
Arabesques, 44
Arcetri, 26
Architects, professional, 41; employment of, 40, 41
Arcivescovo, Villa del, 42, 297-298
Arrangement, symmetrical, 48

B

Baccio del Bianca, 399
Baroque, design, 367; influence, 297; movement, 45; panelling, 81; properties of, 46; style, 45, 400; taste, 81, 307; Tuscan, 45, 46
Beams, 33
Belcaro, 42, 269-271
Berain, 50
Bianca Cappella, 223, 224, 225
Boccaccio, 56, 70, 345
Bonaccorsi, family, 113, 121, 155
Bondi, family, 81
Botticelli, Sandro, 61, 64, 345, 346
Box Gardens, 77
Bricks, 43, 50; kinds of, 63
Bronzino, 253
Brown, "Capability," 67, 368
Brunelleschi, 41

C

Cafaggiuolo, 40, 41, 211-214
Cancellieri, family, 223
Cantina, 27
Capitals, 34
Capponi, Cardinal, 323; family, 155; villa, 155, 156
Careggi, 40, 44, 61, 212
Carnesecchi, family, 399
Carocci, Guido, 99, 399
Cartouches, 49
Carving, 30, 43
Cassoni, 63; intarsiati, 64; painted, 64
Cato, 73
Cavalcanti, family, 100
Ceilings, 33, 49, 55, 122; beamed and painted, 43, 50; decoration of, 65, 66, 178, 179; polychrome decorations, 56, 59; lunette-vaulted, 43, 50; structure of, 61, 62; wooden, 61.
Cellini, Benvenuto, 43
Celsa, Villa, 25, 195-196
Cement, 43
Cetinale, 45, 367-368
Chairs, 64
Chandeliers, 66
Chigi, 285; Agostino, 40; family, 367; Flavio, 367
Cigliano, 26, 37, 81-82
Cinelli, family, 81
Classic antiquity, 38; influence, 36
Coffers, 33
Collazzi, Villa dei, 37, 38, 253-254
Collodi, 45, 79, 385
Colonna, Francesco, 77
Columella, 73
Corbels, 33, 34
Corsi, family, 399; Jacopo, 399
Corsi-Salviati, Villa, 45, 399-400
Corsini, family, 307; Principe, 237
Cortile, 24, 25, 42; pivotal feature, 42; place of, 42; plan of, 46
Courtyard, 24
Cowper, Earl, 346
Crawford and Balcarres, Earl of, 344, 346
Credenze, 63
Crescenzi, Pietro, 73, 77

D

Dados, 60
Dante, 56
Decameron, 179-180, 343-344
Decoration, mural, 33, 44; painted, 33; quality of, 43
della Robbia, 223; Giovanni, 81
Dependencies, 27, 36, 47
Design, character of, 43
Diapered repeats, 44
Dini, Agostino, 253
Donatello, 214
Doors, 66
Doorways, 30, 43, 47, 48, 62

E

Eaves, overhanging, 41
Eleonora of Toledo, 205, 224
Etruscans, 23, 24
Evelyn, Diary, 388
Eyre, Charles, Esq., 121

F

Farmhouse, fortified, 24
Farhill, Miss Mary, 346
Farnesina, Villa, 40
Fattoria, 25
Ficino, Marsilio, 213, 345
Fiesole, 25, 40, 74, 344
Fini, family, 344
Fireplaces, 30, 43, 48, 62
Floors, 43, 50, 62, 63; parquetry, 50
Florence, 7, 10, 26, 40
Fontana, Carlo, 367
Formality, growth of, 36
Fra Angelico, 214
Franciabigio, 223
Frullino, Il, 26, 37, 143-144
Furniture, character of, 64, 65; decoration of, 63; kinds, 63; materials, 63; upholstery, 66

G

Galileo, 99-101
Galletti, Count Paolo, 99
Galli, family, 99
Gardens, arrangement, 73, 78, 79, 82, 156, 177, 195, 386, 387, 399, 400; conception of, 69; design, 179, 180; function of, 67; ideal of, 68, 69; monastic establishments, 69; present condition, 67; relation to house, 69; secular, 69; sources of information, 68
Garzoni, Villa, 45, 385-389
Gelosie, 29, 46
Giardino inglese, 67, 68, 323
Giojello, Il, 99-101
Giotto, 214
Giovanni da Udine, 39
Giulio Romano, 39
Granaio, 27
Guicciardini, 399
Guidetti, family, 81

H

Hamilton, Duke of, 346
Hypnerotomachia Poliphili, 77

I

Intarsia work, 64
Interlacing patterns, 60
Italian Renaissance, 7

L

La Pietra, Villa, 33, 45, 32
Lavabo, 33
Leather, stamped, 62
Le Corti, Villa, 37, 38, 237-238
Le Maschere, Villa, 45, 378
Lemmi, Villa, 61
Lippi, Filippino, 223
Loggia, 24, 25, 34
Lucca, 10, 42, 385, 388; archbishopric of, 297

M

Madama, Villa, 39; influence of, 40
Maiolica, polychrome, 34; roundels, 81
Margaret of Austria, 214
Masèr, 378
Masi, family, 100
Materials, 41
Medallions, 34
Medici, Alessandro de', 214, 224; Caterina, de', 214; Cosimo, the Elder, 205, 211, 214, 345; Cosimo I, de', 25, 36, 81, 205, 269; Cosimo III, de', 81, 225; Ferdinando, 225; Giovanni delle Bande Nere, 205; Giuliano de', 212; Giulio de', 39, 40; Lorenzo the Magnificent, 212, 223; Lorenzino de', 214; Piero de', 214
Michelangelo, 37, 43, 253, 254
Michelozzi, 40, 205, 211
Milton, John, 100
Mino da Fiesole, 34
Mirrors, 66
Misericordia, 344, 345
Monte Mario, 39
Monte Ripaldi, 99, 113
Mugello, 25

O

Ombrellino, Villa, 113
Orchards, 73
Orsini, Clarice, 213

P

Palazzo, 24
Palmieri, Matteo di Marco, 344, 346; Palmiero, 346; Villa, 26, 45, 343-347
Panca, 82

Parterre de broderie, 386, 387
Pastiglia decoration, 63
Pazzi, Villa, 26, 37, 113, 121-123
Peruzzi, Baldassare, 42, 195, 196, 269, 271, 285
Pescia, 385
Pesellino, 64
Pian de' Giullari, 26, 99-101, 113, 121
Pico della Mirandola, 213, 345
Piero de' Medici, 212
Piero di Cosimo, 64
Pitti, Luca, 41; Palace, 41
Plan, flexibility of, 30
Poccetti, Bernardino, 237
Poggio a Cajano, 40, 41, 44, 212, 223-225
Poggio Torselli, 45, 307-308
Pontormo, 223
Porta San Miniato, 99

Q

Quaracchi, 73
Queen Victoria, 346

R

Raphael, 39, 40
Romans, 23
Roofs, 27, 41, 47
Rooms, arrangement of, 30
Rucellai, Bernardo, 73; family, 223
Rusciano, Villa, 41

S

Sala, 30
Salone, 48
Salviati, Maria, 205; Palazzo, 205
San Casciano, 26, 81, 307
San Domenico, 26
Sangallo, Antonio da, 39; Battista da, 39; Giuliano da, 40, 81, 223
San Lorenzo, cloisters of, 78
Santi di Tito, 253
Sassetti, family, 323
Scuderie, 27
Sedia, Dantesca, 64; Savonarola, 64
Serlio, 77
Sesto, 45, 79, 399
Sgabello, 64
Siena, 10, 40, 42, 285, 368
Sienese villas, 41
Solosmei, family, 344
Spalliera, 60, 61
Spedale della Santissima Trinita, 113
Staircase 30, 43, 44, 47, 48
Stefano d'Ugolino, 223
Strozzi, family, 223
Stucco decoration, 47, 49
Symonds, John Addington, 65

T

Tapestries, 62
Tiles, 41, 47; maiolica, 63
Timbers, 33
Topiary work, 77
Tornabuoni, Giovanna, 81; Lorenzo, 61; Lucrezia, 212
Torre del Gallo, 99
Torricelli, Evangelista, 100
Towers, 24
Trebbio, Il, 24, 26, 205-206
Treillage, 77
Turamini, family, 269
Tuscan, landscape, 8; villas, influence of, 38; superstitions, 56
Tuscany, 7, 27, 41

V

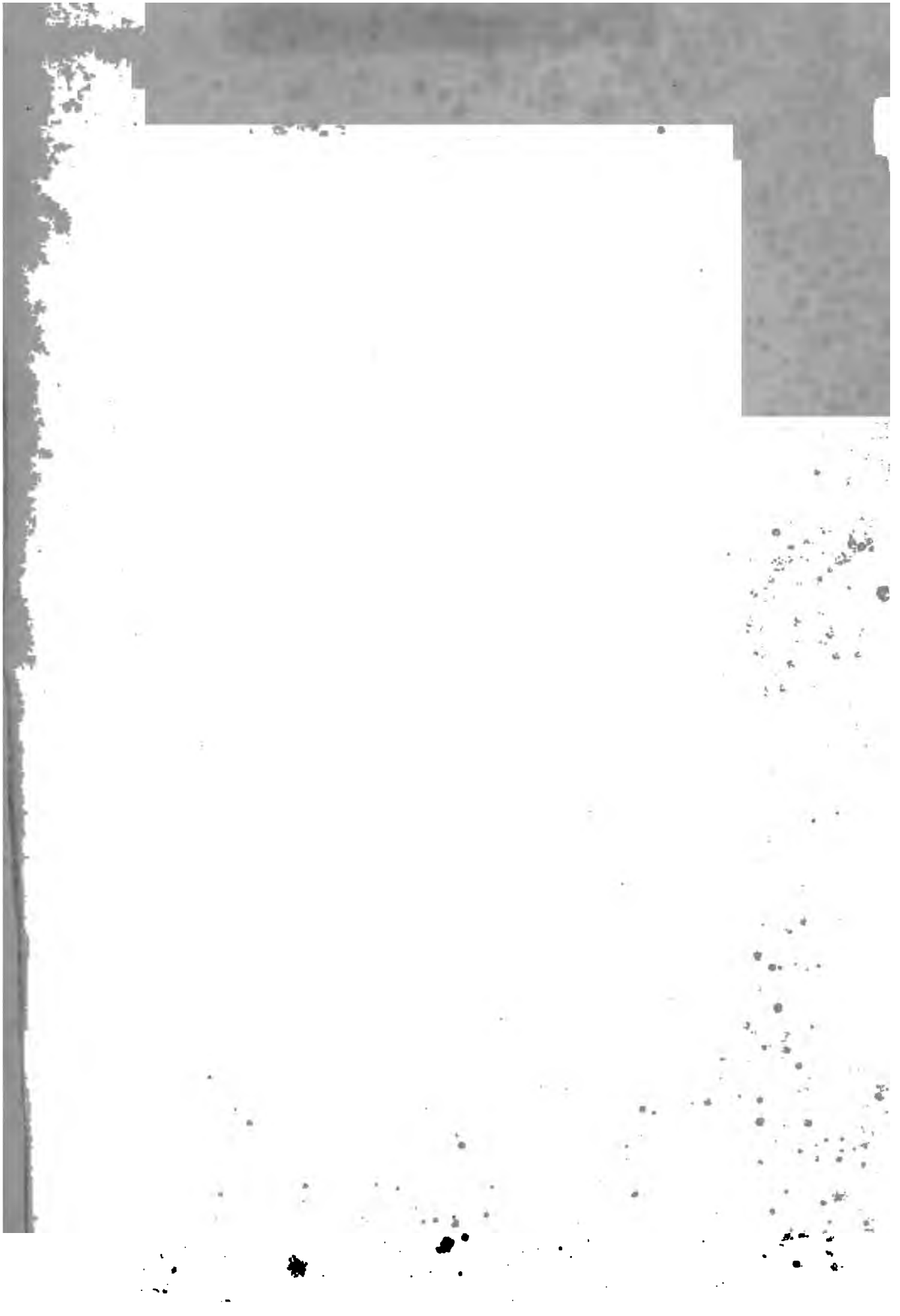
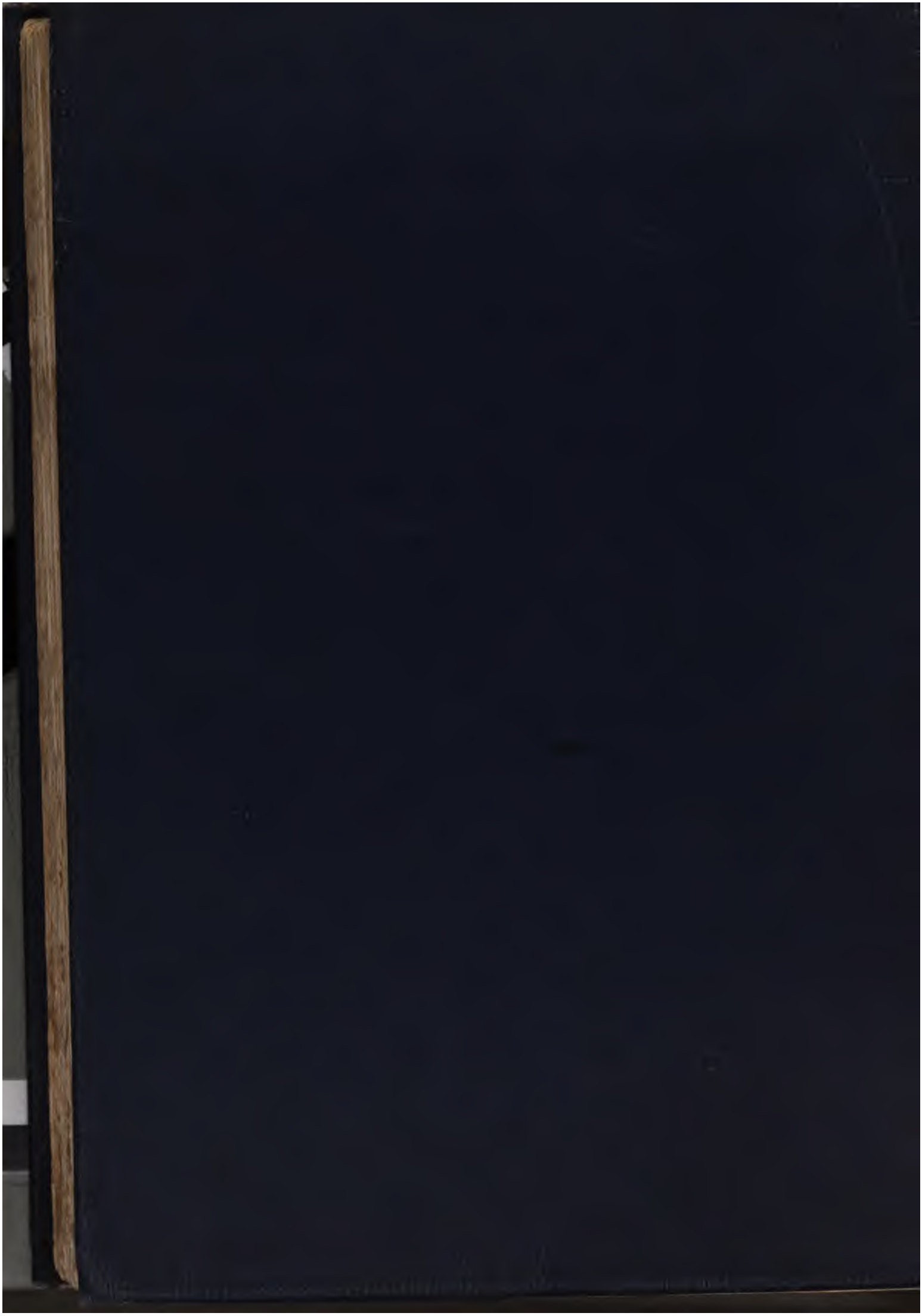
Vacchia, della, family, 121
Val di Pesa, 26
Varro, 73
Vasari, Giorgio, 223, 253
Vaulting, 33, 34, 49; barrel, 43, 56
Vespigiano, 214
Vicobello, 42, 285-286
Villa, arrangement of, 36; concentration of, 27; for defense, 35; design, 41; fabric of, 29, genesis of, 23; life in, 28, 35; meaning of, 8; plan of, 26, 27, 42, 48; purpose of, 37; Renaissance, 24; Roman, 38, 39; Tuscan, 39
Villetta, The, 26, 37, 177-180

W

Walls, 33; colour of, 29, 46, 56; decoration of, 44, 56, 61, 65; designs, 59; embroidered coverings, 44; exterior decoration, 47; geometrical patterns, 56; fabric-hung, 50, 62; landscapes, 60; painted, 59; panelled, 47; stuccoed, 46, 49
Window seats, 33

Z

Zuccheri, Federigo, 399



DO NOT REMOVE
OR
MUTILATE CARD